The
ENGLISH HOME

Celebrating the essence of English style

April 2016 | Issue 134 | £4.10 | UK Edition



KITCHEN SPECIAL INSIDE

The Spring COLLECTIONS

New fabrics & wallpapers to tempt and inspire

The Queen's decorating address book

Favoured interior brands for Her Majesty's residences

KITCHEN SPECIAL

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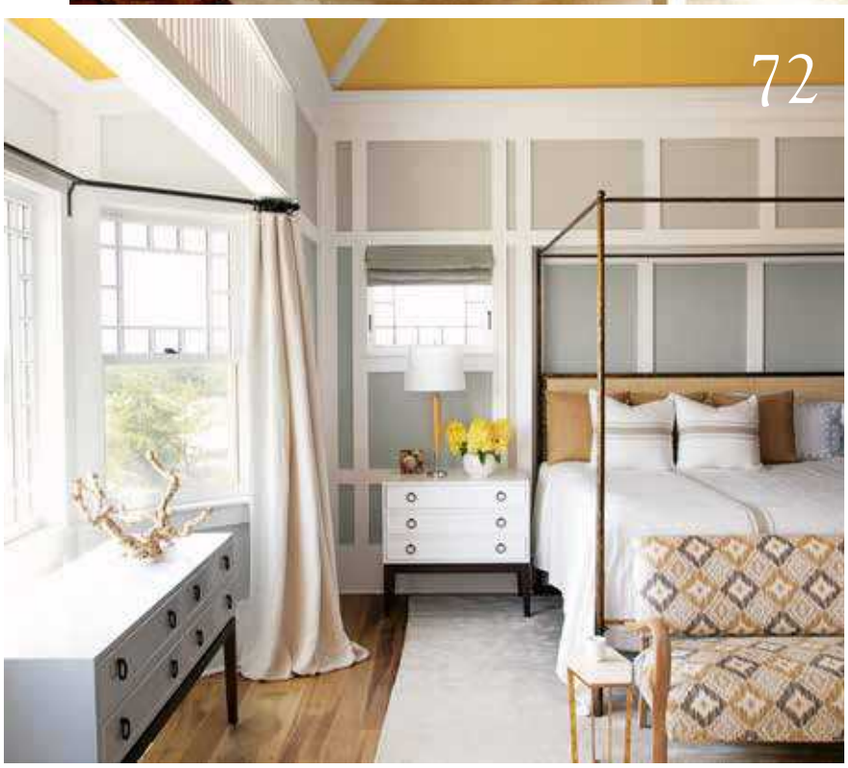
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Kitchen Special

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A letter from home



Behind the scenes

In the past month I have been busy...

Watching fabric being printed at Fermoie (a company we spotlighted as One to Watch) at its Marlborough head office, and enjoying a private insight into its design developments and best-selling colours by country.

Popping into Penhaligon's on London's Regent Street, a jewellery box of a shop for a quintessentially British perfumers. I loved the way that some of the scents were both deliciously historic yet very current at the same time. Home candles are on offer, but very few options as reed diffusers. I hope that might change.

Enjoying the inviting ambience at The Wheatsheaf Inn at Northleach in the Cotswolds, and making friends with a sweet Parson Russell terrier belonging to a neighbouring visitor. I had heard nice reports of the pub and it did not disappoint. I shall return for a meal.



April always feels like such an optimistic month. After what seems like an interminable wait, at last spring is truly upon us, and we can start to open windows and get out into the garden, and finally begin to put decorating ideas into action.

With many of the fabric houses launching their spring collections, there is plenty of temptation. We have curated a showcase of the most alluring design directions inside. And if this is the year that you plan to refit your kitchen, we hope our special extra section on Creating the Perfect English Kitchen will arm you with the key design and technology insights you seek to smooth the process and make researching a new scheme as enjoyable as it should be.

This year, April also sees the momentous occasion of Her Majesty The Queen's 90th birthday on 21 April. Naturally, we couldn't let this wonderful occasion go unmarked. And so you will find a rather lovely insight into the Queen's own decorating address book – in other words, a look at the interior brands that grace the Royal residences. Some are well known to us all, but there are others that you might wish to investigate, given the recognition of a Royal Warrant that each enjoys. I have been privileged to be invited into the archives of several Royal Warrant holders to see wonderful bespoke wallpapers and pieces of furniture specifically created for a palace or two. But, of course, I couldn't possibly reveal the details of any design. Suffice to say, they are just as timelessly tasteful as you would imagine. Wishing you all pleasure in your spring redecorations.

With warmest regards,



Kerryn Harper-Cuss, Editor

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MAIN PHOTOGRAPH SELECTION OF TABLEWARE FROM SUSIE WATSON PORTRAIT RACHEL SMITH

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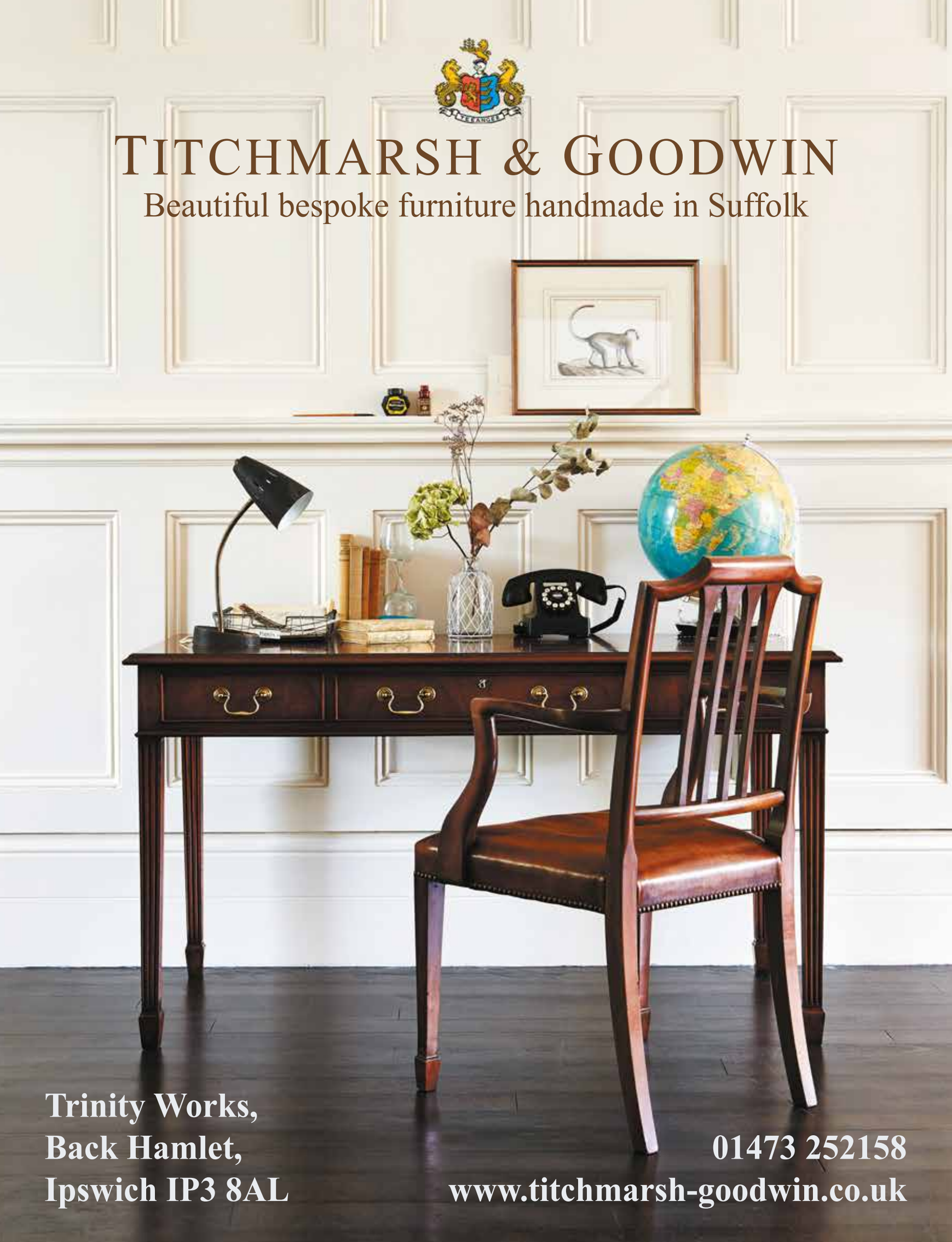
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Flames of desire
This handsomely proportioned limestone fire surround looks classic as an open fire or elegantly country with a neat wood-burning stove.
Devonshire fire surround, £1,530; Beaumont 6KW stove, in ivory, £1,650, both Chesney's

HOME *Comforts*

Embrace spring with a flourish of floral and ivory tones, enchanting patterns, and natural materials

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT

Blanket style
Wool regulates itself to body temperature, so whether sitting on a blanket enjoying the first picnic of spring, or wrapping a throw around cold toes upon the sofa in autumn, woollen blankets suit all seasons.
Sergio throw, turquoise (folded on bicycle basket); Alberto throw, turquoise/grey (hanging on fence), both £49.99, WoolMe

First impressions
The characterful shape and etched-star detail of this lantern pendant light adds a touch of flair. Hanging a translucent lamp in a hallway also helps to bounce natural sunlight around the room when the light is not in use.
Bell Jar hanging lantern (not for outdoor use), £295, The French House

Thoughtful pause
Balance Balinese ikat wallpaper by providing a pause for the eye with plainly painted alcoves.
Java wallpaper, £62 for a 10m roll; Boulder White matt emulsion, £40 for 2.5 litres, Sanderson

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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT

Enduring appeal
This high-back rattan chair is designed to make a long afternoon relaxing in the sunshine a comfortable affair.
Rattan chair, £399, DesRes

Rustic quality
Luxury vinyl planks replicate the effect and texture of wood, and can be used in high-moisture content areas.
Retreat wood-effect luxury vinyl flooring, in Summer House, £49.96 a sq m, Fired Earth

Pastoral past
The new country-house range from India Jane offers pieces with a rustic patina to capture an aged effect.
Orangery dining chair, £435; Hungerford dining table, £2,490; and all other products, India Jane

Statuesque frame
Set a romantic mood with this eye-catching canopy bed. For every bed sold, £30 will be donated to the Born Free Foundation.
Elsa double bed, in ivory, with round finials, £799, Wrought Iron & Brass Bed Company











CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE

Classic patterns
For a contemporary scheme with a relaxed quality, mix a classic sofa shape, such as this chesterfield, with an assortment of soft furnishings in stripes, checks and bohemian patterns. Be sure to keep all background colours tonal to marry the scene altogether. *Ticking Stripe cushion, rose/beech with fan edge, £38; Shetland wool throw, lichen/pearl tartan, £84; chesterfield sofa, from £1,600; and all accessories, Susie Watson*

Sage choice
Inspired by historic fabrics, this soft jacquard is reminiscent of summer's blue skies. Heighten the classic reference with embroidered sheets. *Chatsworth range, sage, from £120 for a double duvet cover, Christy*

Purple glaze
Emma Bridgewater's new Wallflower range features violet and plum colours. Pick out the vivid purples for a springtime tableware display with eye-catching depth. *Wallflower eight-and-a-half-inch plate, £17.95, Emma Bridgewater* ■



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www.tetrad.co.uk



Blue Hen & Border set of three square cake tins, £35, Emma Bridgewater





Vintage baking trays (designs and sizes vary), from £8.50, RE-found Objects



Jelly & Cake oven glove, £25, Thornback & Peel

ROYAL ICING

The English Home team needs very little encouragement to find an excuse for a spot of baking, from the village fête to charity coffee mornings to a private competition with the contestants on *The Great British Bake Off*. April 2016 is particularly momentous, of course, so we are donning aprons, sifting the icing sugar and brandishing cake slices in preparation to celebrate Her Majesty's 90th birthday. Wishing you a very happy birthday, Ma'am.



LSA International glass dome and cake stand, £70, John Lewis



Splash embossing rolling pin, £24, Boon Homeware from Not on the High Street.com

Blue and white striped sugar storage jar, £30, Cornishware



Vera Wang by Wedgwood Love Knots Cake Slice and Knife Set, £45, John Lewis



God Save The Queen tea towel, £7.95, Royal Collection Trust Shop/© HM Queen Elizabeth II 2016



Vintage-style weighing scales, £49.95, Dotcomgiftshop



CAKE PHOTOGRAPH © NATHAN KING/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO



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Goa wallpaper in Sun Baked, £90 a roll, Thibaut from Wallpaperdirect.com



Safari fine bone china mugs, £14.50 each, Holly Lasseter



Queen Palm Tree Design handmade bronze salad servers, £26, in silver, brass and copper, Waterlane Collection

JUNGLE STORY

Lions, elephants, monkeys and giraffes are running amok through abundant foliage in the latest interior collections. Maybe it is an extension of the 1970s echoes in interiors? Maybe it marks the 80th anniversary of author Rudyard Kipling's death. Or maybe it is the April film premiere of a Hollywood remake of *The Jungle Book* that has spawned a jungle flavour to tempt decorators to the wild side.



Giraffe Animal Print, from £35, Louise Tate (available in various sizes, mounted and unmounted)



The Jungle Book, Rudyard Kipling, £9.99, Puffin



Hothouse lampshade, from £72, Sophie Thompson, Terrarium Designs



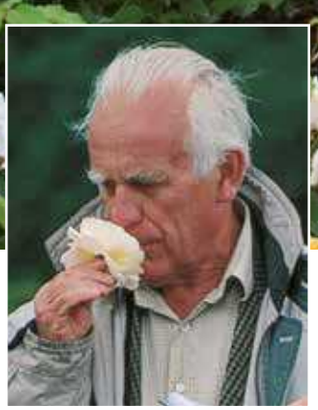
Zhu table lamp, £490, Oka

Pampas 'Chatsworth' chair, from £3,250, House of Hackney





Lacquer tusk table, £695, Jonathan Adler



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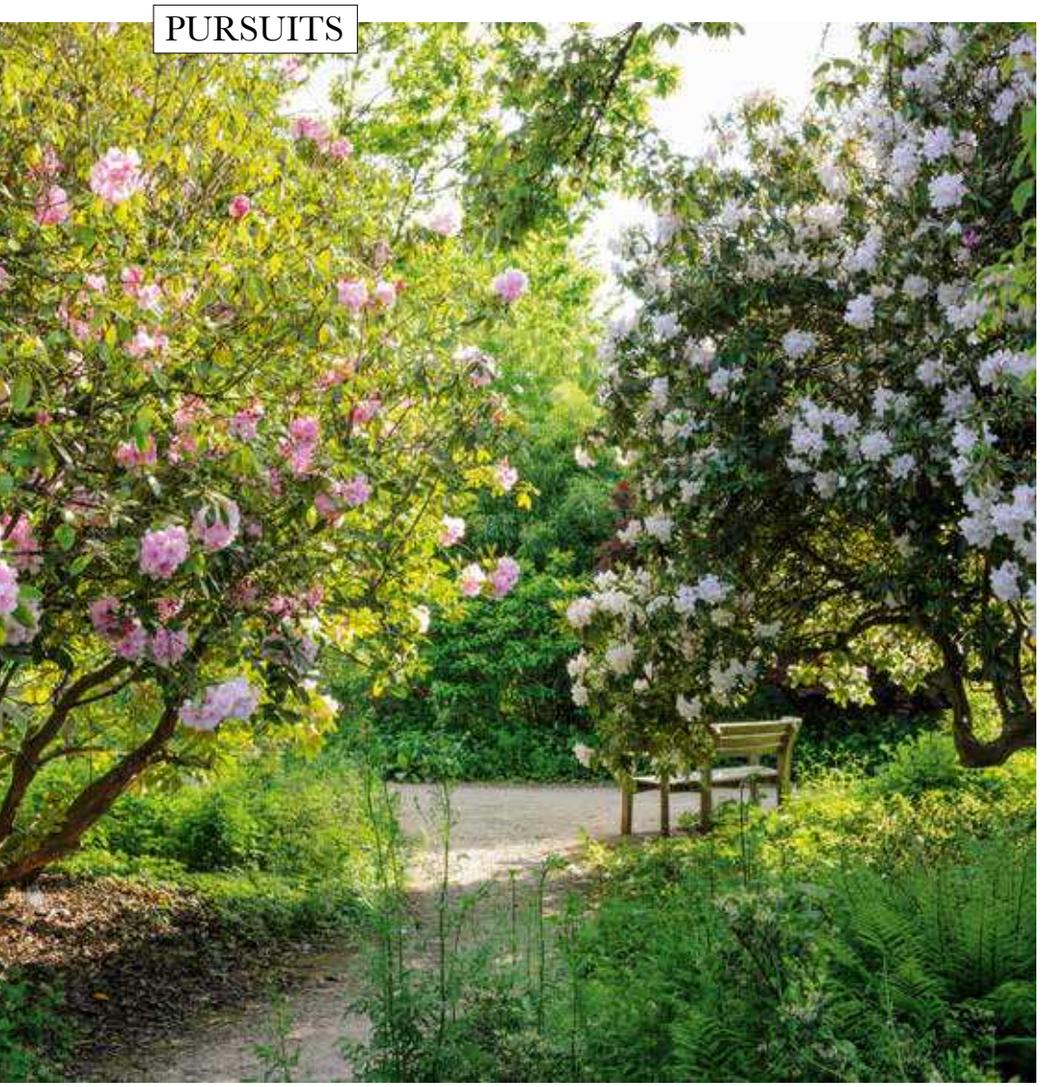
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NOTEBOOK

Our monthly digest of inside information on people, places and pursuits

PURSUITS



Springtime stroll

2016 is officially 'the year of the English garden', to mark the 300th anniversary of Lancelot 'Capability' Brown's birth, so why not make the most of the great outdoors?

Springtime shows abound at the Royal Horticultural Society's gardens, and there is no better time for an inspirational and invigorating visit. Meander through the UK's first flowering narcissi at RHS Rosemoor, in Devon – its southerly location enjoys the warmth of the sun sooner than most – or enjoy spring's sweet aroma as half a million bulbs burst into bloom at RHS Hyde Hall in Essex.

Walk amongst snowdrops and irises at RHS Harlow Carr in Harrogate, or spot crocuses bursting through on the conifer lawn at RHS Wisley in Surrey. Non-RHS members even get free entry to RHS gardens on 15 April as part of National Gardening Week.

Other horticultural events include the RHS London Spring Plant Extravaganza (1-2 April); Essex Plant Heritage Spring Plant Fair (16-17 April), and the Chrysanthemum Society show (23-24 April) at Hyde Hall; and Spring Festival Weekend at Harlow Carr (30 April – 1 May). *rhs.org.uk*

Diary – *events worth noting*

LANDSCAPE LOVE Brook Gallery in Devon will host the largest selection of Royal Academician Norman Ackroyd's landscape etchings ever to be shown outside London. Together with rare and unique works from his current and back catalogue, the artworks will go on display in both the gallery's locations, in Exeter and Budleigh Salterton.
16 March – 22 April, brookgallery.co.uk



TREASURE SEEKER This year's Cotswolds Art & Antique Dealers' Association Fair at Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire will mark the event's fifth anniversary. With price tags from £100 to over £100,000, expect top quality items, from furniture and carpets to silver.
21-24 April, thecada.org

SLIP AWAY The popularity of BBC television programme *The Great Pottery Throw Down* has prompted ceramics courses across the country to fill up fast.

To dip a toe in before committing to a full course, Potstop in Bristol offers a two-hour masterclass tailored to suit individuals' interests and abilities.
potstop-pottery.co.uk

A Good Read



The Floral Patterns of India by Henry Wilson (£32, Thames & Hudson)

Capturing the richness of India's architecture, surface embellishment and ornamentation, this book reveals the skill, patience and imagination of the thousands of craftsmen who have rendered floral motifs with precision and creativity. Detailed photographs are juxtaposed with graphic depictions of floral designs, which help decipher the original patterns.

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Rachel Bates

After growing up in rural Cheshire and forging a media career in London, Rachel Bates' passion for interiors took flight whilst redesigning her own home. She launched Rachel Bates Interiors in Cheshire in 2012 and she has since launched a homewares collection.

"Colourful, elegant, exquisite and of the finest artisan quality" is the design philosophy of this interior designer. These qualities are exemplified in The Hélène bedstead, Bates' recent collaboration with And So To Bed.

Inspired by her love of antique furniture and the Baroque and Rococo eras – synonymous with the Palace of Versailles – this opulent bed features ornate detailing, such as intricately hand-carved gold-leafed peacock feathers set against patterned hydrangeas. Birds and botanicals, in particular the peacock, are signature motifs throughout Bates' work.

rachelbatesinteriors.com





Kit Miles

Liberty managing director Ed Burstell knows a thing or two about well considered homewares, and he calls Kit Miles "my favourite up-and-coming textile designer," going on to say "his fabrics, cushions and wallpaper are unlike anything I've seen." The iconic Regent Street store has become the first stockist of nine vivid Kit Miles cushions, printed using silks, linens and cotton.

After completing his MA in textile design at the Royal College of Art, and tired of being told to tone down his avant-garde style, Miles formed his own studio dedicated to elegant draughtsmanship and a futuristic use of scale, colour and imagery.

kitmiles.co.uk







Charlotte Gaisford

Zesty greens, fresh bright ochre and pale blues abound in Charlotte Gaisford's first fabric collection, The Hermitage. Mixing chinoiserie touches with springtime sprigs and abstract repeats, this collection was inspired by hand-painted wallpaper she discovered in an old house in Northumberland. There are ten different designs with several colourways, suitable for upholstery, soft furnishings, curtains and blinds. Gaisford recently graduated as a mature student with a degree in fashion and textiles.

charlottegaisford.co.uk





Gidleigh Park

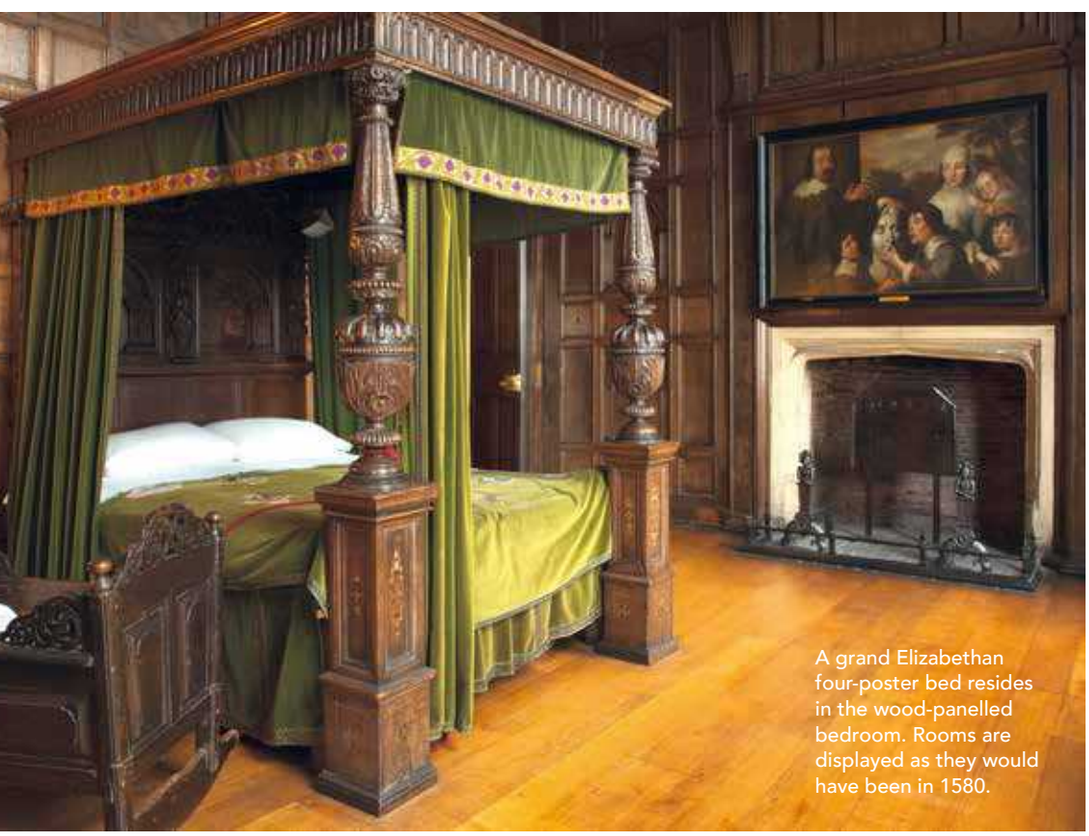
One of Britain's most elegant Arts and Crafts houses, Gidleigh Park, on Dartmoor in Devon, was built as a private residence in 1928 for Australian shipping magnate CHC McIlwraith. Now serving as a luxury five-star hotel, Gidleigh Park has welcomed a new executive head chef.

Having won Michelin stars in every kitchen he has headed since 1993, Michael Wignall was previously head chef at The Latymer in Surrey. His arrival at Gidleigh Park follows the departure of Michael Caines after 21 years. Describing his food as modern, technical and meaningful, Wignall said: "Gidleigh Park enjoys an enviable record of excellence, and I'm delighted to take up my place here." *gidleigh.co.uk*

Chelsea Art Fair

Chelsea Art Fair will celebrate its '21st birthday' this year with a vibrant and diverse array of artworks for sale. Held at Chelsea Old Town Hall from Thursday 21 April to Sunday 24 April, the fair will feature work by well-known artists, and new discoveries, from around 30 of the UK's most respected galleries. From grand statement pieces to smaller, more intimate work, most of the art will be priced from £500 to £50,000, with some sculptures exceeding that, and many works will be shown for the first time.
chelseaartfair.org





A grand Elizabethan four-poster bed resides in the wood-panelled bedroom. Rooms are displayed as they would have been in 1580.

The Red Lodge Museum

Tucked away near Bristol's busy Park Street is a hidden historic gem. Built circa 1580 and painstakingly restored several times across its history, The Red Lodge Museum has magnificent Tudor rooms and a recreated Elizabethan-style knot garden.

Originally a lodge to the Great House where Queen Elizabeth I once stayed, and later a Victorian girls' reform school, it is a much-loved window into the past.

The Great Oak Room, regarded as one of the finest rooms in the West Country, retains its original plasterwork ceiling, oak panelling, interior porch and carved chimneypiece. The house was altered in the early eighteenth century and the remaining rooms are furnished in Stuart and Georgian styles. Reopening in April after its winter closure, admission is free of charge.
bristolmuseums.org.uk

FEATURE SARAH FEELEY **PHOTOGRAPH** P23 (TREES) RHS/JASON INGRAM. P25 PHILIPPA GEDGE. P26 (GIDLEIGH PARK) BROWNSWORD HOTELS. P26 (BED) © BRISTOL MUSEUMS, GALLERIES & ARCHIVES

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In the spacious kitchen, neutral walls and cabinetry in Farrow & Ball's Pavilion Gray are enlivened by colourful antique rugs bought at auction in Cornwall and vibrant geometric splashback tiles by Fired Earth.







The art of COLLECTING

Perched upon the border where three counties meet, Jane and John Alexander are perfectly located to indulge their joint passion for art and antiques

FEATURE AMANDER MEADE PHOTOGRAPHY RACHAEL SMITH STYLING MARK THOMAS







ABOVE A generous lava-stone sink by Fired Earth is framed by painted Shaker-style cabinetry. Fitted and free-standing pieces painted in different shades add an informal feel.

RIGHT The tablecloth is made using a cheerful 'Ducks and Chickens' fabric by Clarke & Clarke, whilst the spongeware is by Royal Winton.

Living almost exactly on the border between Northamptonshire and Rutland and with Lincolnshire less than ten miles away, Jane and John Alexander have a passion for art and delight in browsing the wonderful independent shops and galleries all three counties have to offer.

Built in the centre of a village on a site formerly occupied by a bungalow, the Alexander house is a charismatic, three-storey family home. The couple struggled for months to find a suitable village property, having fallen in love with the area and already selected a nearby school for their younger daughters. So when Jane noticed an area under development she was keen to investigate. "A builder had purchased two plots of land and secured planning approval to create two three-storey family homes."

John is a chartered surveyor and the couple run their own independent estate agency, so they had plenty of ideas about what they wanted and didn't want in a house. "We discussed the possibility of purchasing one of the plots with the builder," explains Jane, "and we agreed a price for him to continue with the build on our behalf." The couple worked closely with the builder during the planning process, renting a property nearby for a year whilst their new home was under construction. John undertook the responsibility of the design for the gardens whilst Jane created the interior schemes. "We tweaked the original plans adding a garden room off the kitchen to provide useful extra living space and to make the most of the tranquil views of the gardens and meadows beyond. John and I are both keen gardeners, and I love to use plenty of my own fresh flowers in the house – they instantly lift my mood and create a happy feeling."

When it came to the interior decoration, Jane took a pragmatic view. An enthusiastic collector of art and ▸


Squash
Earl Grey
Yorkshire T
Yogurt

RIGHT A charming sculpture of Paddy, Jane's wire-haired dachshund, was commissioned by John as a surprise gift.

BELOW Richly hued plaid wallpaper by Mulberry and a colourful geometric rug by Tabari set a welcoming tone in the entrance hall. A pair of antique Italian chairs has been recovered in a Colefax and Fowler fabric whilst the umbrella stand was an auction purchase.











antiques over 30 years, her challenge was to create a scheme in which her existing furniture would blend seamlessly into a brand new property – a feat she achieved with inspired colour choices and some clever reinvention. "I had so much fun devising the interior," she recalls, "My taste is bold – especially with use of colour – and I love pattern and texture which is always more forgiving in a busy house," she adds.

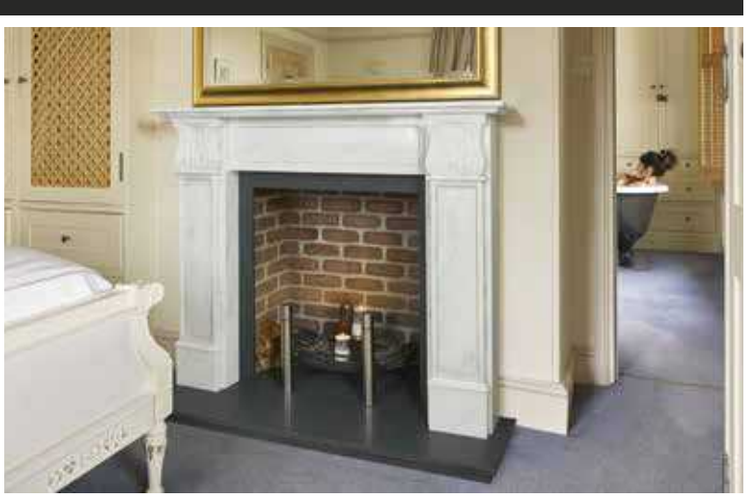
A longstanding and wholehearted supporter of British brands, Jane has used fabrics, paint and wallpaper by her favourite companies including Colefax and Fowler, Farrow & Ball and Mulberry. Vibrant fabrics and lively textiles abound throughout the ground floor, with colourful rugs adding warmth to the spacious dining kitchen where Jane opted for free-standing furniture by Fired Earth, painted in different shades to add interest. With two daughters still at home and three grown-up children who visit frequently the seven bedrooms are often full. Jane likes to open up the doors of the sitting room, kitchen and drawing rooms which all lead from the Mulberry papered central hallway, to create an open-plan feeling and an easy flow.

Comfort and colour are at the heart of Jane's scheme in the drawing room, where favourite pieces of furniture such as the large ottoman have been lovingly re-upholstered or freshened up with the addition of new cushions. In the sun-filled, south-facing garden room, two Victorian sofas purchased at auction many years ago were also given a new lease of life with ▸

ABOVE A pair of delicate eighteenth-century bergère chairs contrast beautifully with the handsome fringed ottoman, which was custom made by LCT Upholsterers.
LEFT A serene seascape and a striking glass pendant light add colour to the neutral landing.

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new fabrics by Colefax and Fowler and Voyage. They provide the perfect aspect from which to admire Jane's extensive art collection, which adorns every wall in the house, but is so prolific in here, the room feels like a personal gallery. "I love nothing more than spending the day at an auction house and I used to take the children with me in their prams when they were babies," says Jane. "I collect first and foremost for myself, buying what I love, but hopefully my purchases are a good investment too. John and I lived in Cornwall for five years so much of my modern art is Cornish but I think it sits well with the more traditional pieces."

Upstairs on the first floor the couple's shared bathroom definitely reflects the bright blue and white hues so closely associated with Cornwall, and thanks to the matching rope mirrors which hang above twin basins, a distinctly coastal feeling prevails. On

ABOVE Two Victorian sofas and an upholstered coffee table have been re-covered. The floral fabric is Cartouche by Colefax and Fowler, whilst the spot fabric is by Voyage.

LEFT Flying Ducks wallpaper by Mulberry Home adds a note of humour in the downstairs cloakroom.

ABOVE The master bedroom has an uplifting scheme of warm golds with Carrington Stripe wallpaper by Colefax and Fowler and cushions in fabrics by Nina Campbell.

RIGHT A combination of bold patterns in the master bathroom is tied together by a unifying blue. The wallpaper is Calder by Jane Churchill, whilst the blind is in Salcombe Rose by Baker Lifestyle.

this floor there are five bedrooms including one each for daughters Poppy, 17, and Phoebe, 19, as well as the master bedroom which is classically decorated in a refined gold stripe. Jane's favourite piece – a prized Fred Yates painting of Penzance – hangs above the bed. The second floor roof space offers a further two bedrooms and provides a sanctuary for the girls to entertain their friends.

Delightfully established and full of character, it is hard to believe this house is still only six years old. Using a blend of professional insight and natural design instinct, Jane and John have combined their talents and love of collecting to fill the house with antique furniture, sculpture, paintings and objets d'art. Their home displays all the benefits of a new build in terms of generous proportions and rooms that flow beautifully, yet the warm and elegant interior gives the impression of a much older, traditional country property. It is proof that the best of both worlds in one home is entirely possible. ■



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Home in the MAKING

Time and a love for interiors have made this extended farmhouse age with grace as well as keeping up with the new

FEATURE, STYLING AND PHOTOGRAPHS GABI TUBBS





The tall, pitched roof of the new living area complements the beams of the adjoining kitchen, and is enjoyed by Buzz the poodle (see bottom right). The walls are painted in Flake White by Fired Earth and the woodwork is Pigeon by Farrow & Ball.









Though it may be hard to imagine, Anna Dewar actually looks forward to having builders in, "I love the feeling of something happening and do not mind change – I think it is exciting," she readily affirms. It might have something to do with the fact that the couple have lived in their Oxfordshire farmhouse for over 25 years, and the process of getting the once-neglected house back on its feet has been gradual to say the least.

"Fortunately, I prefer a look to evolve. I am not into this instant designer look. We chose the house purely because it felt good. We were unashamedly seduced by the abundance of space and the house being in the prettiest countryside we could find. We just could not resist," Anna clearly recalls.

A bonus, of course, was that the property happened to be within commuting distance of London – a prerequisite for Anna's husband Hamish, who has to be in town for his job as a painting conservator. Anna was thrilled that the house had not been done-up for years – in fact, it was so 'undone' that most of the original features were intact. The layout was quirky and charming, with a warren of corridors, rooms – large and small – and two staircases, one at either end of the house. Most of the walls were rather eccentric, bowing in and out with crooked doorframes and wobbly doors, which emphasised the property's characteristics.

What they liked about it, too, was that the front of the house was not obvious from the road, and opened out at the back onto the garden with a lovely, southwest aspect. It had all the good things one associates with living in the country: minutes from a good-sized village with a grocer, church and pub, and set within breathtaking countryside. Originally a farm, the house was partly built in the seventeenth century, with later additions in the eighteenth century. The front of the property, which is actually at the side, was probably a nineteenth-century modification, built when the then owner tried to gentrify the farm.

"When we bought the house, there were no flower borders to speak of, or anything pretty. It did, however, have wonderful drystone walls," Anna remembers. Wisely, they focused their attention on the garden and land immediately. Despite not being gardeners, the couple had strong ideas and knew the look they wanted to achieve. Anna had grown up in a house with wildflower meadows and thought the fields surrounding the house would be ideal for such planting. Another inspiration was her sister-in-law's lush garden, which had magnificent, climbing roses, unpretentious but incredibly beautiful; just the kind

ABOVE LEFT The walls in the kitchen are painted in Bone, by Farrow & Ball, with an oily wash over the top and finished with a glaze to age and protect it.
ABOVE An array of stripy Cornishware and Spode, new and old, jostles for space with the French brocante finds.
OPPOSITE The kitchen was originally two small rooms. The cupboards were made by a local carpenter, who took two years to complete the job. Most of the unsightly kitchenware is kept in an adjacent scullery.



Anna did not like the original fireplace, so covered the tiles with slate. The pictures came from a sale at Christie's. The old Chinese lacquer cabinet is from Gordon Reece.





We were unashamedly seduced by the abundance of space

of garden they knew would suit this farmhouse. The couple turned to garden designer Tim Rees for help. His seemingly laid-back attitude and professional knowledge of plants and trees, as well as an understanding of what Hamish and Anna envisaged, suited perfectly. No battle of wills, no bossing around. As a result, it is the relaxed beauty of the garden and surrounding meadows that have given this house a setting it deserves.

"Whilst the outside took shape, we did the inside up very slowly, breaking the bank doing all the boring rewiring and central heating, putting in a kitchen, then plastering walls. These were bare stone and in great need of a coat of paint. As we liked the house as it was, we did not do a lot structurally, apart from changing a window in the kitchen to let in more light and we knocked two rooms into one to make the big farmhouse kitchen. We lived in a mess and decorative chaos." By this stage, most stay-at-home mums might have struggled to cope with the situation, but not

ABOVE The front of the house is framed by a dry-stone wall, where Hamish's small garden can be found.
LEFT In the main bedroom, the painting over the fireplace was from an auction at Christie's, London. For similar wall lights try Beaumont & Fletcher.

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Anna, who by her own admission declares: "I am good at living in a tip!"

Today, the colour scheme throughout is calm and neutral. "I thought the house was rather like a very nice pub and the best pubs were all painted the same colour and kept very bare," Anna says with a smile when asked what influenced her choice. She decided on Farrow & Ball's String, which is light but warm, and did not disguise the eccentricities of the house. It proved to be a good backdrop for pictures. "Keeping it all simple in muted colours means the decoration comes from the objects in the room," she affirms.

When it came to furnishing the farmhouse, Anna travelled the length and breadth of Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire hunting for pieces that were being imported from Eastern Europe as well as France. She tracked down some extremely good bargains, but, even so, everything seemed expensive – covering sofas, buying curtains and carpets. Anna tried to think of ways in which she could generate funds and resolved that, as the house was unusual and taking shape, the garden pretty and spacious with plenty of outbuildings, renting the house out for photographic shoots could be an option. It certainly worked, and the house was paying for its restoration, which was, and still is, very satisfying.

Does it not drive Hamish mad? "Well, sometimes, I come home and it is Christmas in the summer, or the entrance hall has been completely transformed and I think 'Oh, I have opened the wrong door!' He finds that sense of shifting quite amusing."

Three and a half years ago, their three children having flown the nest, Anna felt she was ready for another big change. "Having lived here for nearly a quarter of a century, I have to admit that I was never really happy with my old kitchen-cum-breakfast-cum-

ABOVE LEFT The bed came from a French junk shop and is dressed with linens from Cologne & Cotton. The painted bedside tables are from an antiques shop in Petworth, West Sussex. The lamps are from Whispering Pines.
TOP RIGHT Tabby Chubby's favourite spot is the duvet in the floral bedroom.
BOTTOM RIGHT The Victorian basin and taps were in the house. The mirror is from French Gray.







ABOVE Bedroom curtains in Daisy Chain fabric by Bennison. "Lovely fabrics tend to be expensive, but hopefully they are forever and well worth waiting for," says Anna.
TOP RIGHT A sweet posy adds a burst of colour.
BOTTOM RIGHT The Eastern European bench was bought at Tobias and the Angel, London. For similar reproduction pieces try Scumble Goosie.

informal-dining room. Not having a view was my main grudge, considering how much time I spent in it." Hamish and Anna decided to utilise the dead outside space between the living room and kitchen, connecting all three. With the help of architect Tony Holmes, from Holmes Morgan Architects, near Bath, they designed an impressive pitched-roof extension with a bank of French windows to one side, opening out onto the stable yard and kitchen garden. "We wanted it to look like it has always been there and avoid the typical orangery or conservatory, which from experience are either too hot or too cold depending on the season."

The new annexe complements the quintessential Cotswold-stone farmhouse superbly. Anna enthuses, "It literally transformed the way we live and entertain, our architect did a brilliant job." ■

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In the open-plan drawing and dining room, Hugh's artwork adorns walls, furniture, the mosaic surround and even the ceiling rose. The media cupboard is by Dunford Woodwork.

Place of INSPIRATION

A passion for creativity, colour and design suffuses every aspect of this unique Georgian villa in Lyme Regis

FEATURE CHRISTINE STOVELL PHOTOGRAPHY NICK CARTER





ABOVE Hugh found the kitchen table discarded outside a hotel and decorated it with a painting of his family in acrobatic pose. The crockery is his own design.

LEFT Greens, golds and polished boards banish the house's former gloom.

OPPOSITE A relaxed veranda seating area provides sea views. A bottle wall and solar PV panels show Hugh and Candida's commitment to eco improvements.

Above a door in Hugh and Candida Dunford Wood's distinctive Georgian home, a sign reads: 'Celebrate Life'. It is a maxim that epitomises the energy and enthusiasm of artist Hugh and environmentalist Candida, and is the force igniting a dynamic style which is both individual and welcoming.

Hugh's first encounter with the Grade II listed house was as a temporary lodger when helping to establish Lyme Regis ArtsFest. He returned home to Oxfordshire determined to live by the sea, but it was another three years before he and Candida bought a ruined cottage in the middle of Lyme, with the intention of replacing it with an eco house. Then, whilst the couple waited for planning permission, the old lady, with whom Hugh had once lodged, died. "At her funeral, her son asked if we would be interested in staying here whilst we built our house," recalls Hugh.





ABOVE The walls are decorated in Hugh's Featherbed design wallpaper. The Turkish carpet came from Candida's grandfather.
RIGHT Hugh's 'pickled people' in their apothecary jars were exhibited at the Chelsea Arts Club.
OPPOSITE A portrait of Hugh's ancestor Mary Elliot gazes out above what he describes as a private "sitouterie" in the Blue Room.

"I have designed many wallpapers for my own delight, and to better show off my own paintings"

The conclusion of what Hugh describes as a "longer, miraculous story" was that he and Candida did not, after all, proceed with their original plans but instead, in 2006, became the owners of the house which had been their temporary home.

Built in 1824, The Little Place was once home to Sir Laurence Whistler, the Queen's glass engraver, who has left his mark on several of the windows there. He is commemorated, too, by a secret wood leading down to the sea, which is named after him. There is also a large, productive garden where sculptures can be viewed during Dorset Arts Weeks.

Hugh describes the six-bedroom house as being "deep, dark, gloomy and thickly carpeted" when he and Candida moved in. "The previous owner had been raised in Mexico and kept the heating on even in July." Allowing the house to breathe again meant tackling an over-abundance of furniture, polishing floorboards and introducing light into the rooms in the form of Hugh's remarkable artworks, textiles and hand-blocked wallpapers.

An early job was the expensive task of restoring the hipped slate roof. After being appointed artist in residence for the 400th anniversary of the first settlement of Bermuda in 2009, Hugh added the studio within the walled back courtyard. Unforeseen problems with foundations and the discovery of a well might have deterred some people, but Hugh took advantage of both, harvesting the well water for the garden and installing underfloor heating in his studio which, he remarks happily, has enabled him to work in luxury.







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In keeping with their sustainable living aims, Hugh and Candida have made as many adjustments to the house as planning rules allow. In 2013 solar photovoltaic panels were added to the glazed roof of the veranda. The panels provide nearly all of the household's electricity and the design is used as an example of good and elegant practice. That the house's artistic pedigree continues to inspire and energise is evident in every room and in its generosity of spirit. Even the redundant ceiling roses became works of art – Hugh pondered them during his morning yoga and spotted a blank canvas. "Why is it that only dentists have inherited the Renaissance love of ceiling art?" he asks. Hugh is a graduate of the Ruskin School of Art in Oxford and says he was fortunate to have two great mentors. "One of these was the under-appreciated Peggy Angus, with whom I worked as an apprentice, printing her wallpapers. Since then, I have designed many papers for my own delight and to better show off my own paintings."

Hugh remarks that people always found their Oxfordshire house over-decorated "until we came to sell, when buyers constantly commented on the wallpapers and asked where we found them."

ABOVE The stairs are hung with Hugh's portraits of his wife and children. The Venetian gold paint of the distinctive Cardoon wallpaper alters with the light.

LEFT Dream, sit and think in the Blue Room, where a colonial-style bed and Amaryth wallpaper in delicate blue and white create a light, uplifting mood.

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The realisation that wallpaper was back in fashion prompted Hugh to set up his studio where, like his mentors before him, he trains young apprentices to help print his designs. He aims to work closely in tone using only two colours to allow the wallpaper to act as a background for furniture and paintings. The richness of the Red Room and the contrasting serenity of the Blue Room demonstrate this to uplifting effect, and can be enjoyed by guests, since both rooms double as bed and breakfast accommodation.

He also paints some of his furniture, mostly figuratively, to celebrate whatever is happening at the time. But when Hugh wanted to decorate a large media-storage cupboard with portraits of his favourite composers, Candida suggested the more subtle, Amarynth wallpaper design for the panels instead.

Hugh and Candida's passion for art, design and sustainable living draws visitors from all over the world and, as part of their many projects, the couple show monthly documentaries on artists and environmental themes. There is always a waiting list for Hugh's weekend courses and, in summer, the veranda, with its extensive views of the coast, is a popular spot to sit with tea and a slice of cake to enjoy the Sculpture Garden. Perhaps it is fitting that, in what was once home to a renowned glass engraver, Hugh and Candida celebrate life with an artistic glass that is not merely half full, but almost overflowing. ■

ABOVE Fit for a king, the Red Room is dominated by a magnificent old four poster bed bearing what Hugh playfully refers to as a 'dubious panel' suggesting that a member of royalty once slept there.
LEFT Dramatic views of the Golden Cap on the Dorset coastline inspire Hugh's figurative landscapes and bring the outside in.







Crafting MASTERPIECES IN PRINT

Handprinting wallpapers is a rare and specialist skill, requiring great patience and dexterity as well as artistic talent. The process is slow and craftsmanlike. Each lino block is meticulously cut by hand, either in relief or '*intaglio*' and pigments are specially mixed to create a wide range of colour combinations. Slowly the printed works build into a symphony of pattern and hues. The repainting of the block as the pattern is repeated, differences in hand pressure as the block is applied, and registration by eye combine to create an irregularity of texture unique to every piece, adding a very human touch to the wallpaper. The subtle variations of this traditional, labour-intensive process are something which the flat uniformity of digital printing cannot replicate.

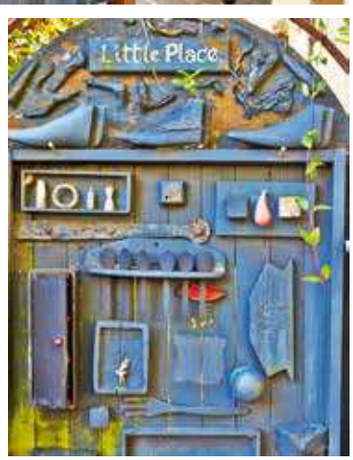
Hugh Dunford Wood likens the creation of his wallpaper designs to music. He speaks of composing harmonious layers to offer a variety of moods. From intricate florals to flowing geometrics, his range of designs balance rhythm and colour to suit each interior setting. And he urges his clients not to be afraid to hang pictures and mirrors on this wallpaper. "It is designed to be a backdrop to your living, and you will find your eye's delight unconsciously playing over the surface of these rich wall coverings," he says.

Many designs reference the natural world. The drifting plumes of Featherbed, for example, were inspired as Hugh watched the feathers of nesting gulls float past the windows of a former studio. A bespoke service enables clients to choose any design in any combination of two colours. The company has produced wallpaper for hotels, restaurants – and even opera houses – but they are equally happy to work on a modest scale. "We specialise in the smallest room in homes," Hugh quips. "Loos don't take much wallpaper!" ■

TOP LEFT Hugh's passion for art and design has driven a vast range of creative projects. TOP CENTRE Gold Tudor Roll wallpaper, a design made from a bride's trousseau. TOP RIGHT This original cat cushion was made by Hugh for his daughter. BELOW The studio is the creative hub of Hugh's enterprise. Regular workshops offer an opportunity to learn the skills involved. BOTTOM LEFT Hugh's unique Collino prints are one-off narrative prints made of small separate linocuts. BOTTOM RIGHT The front gate is made from a collection of finds from Bridport Market.







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LIVING *in harmony*

A couple combine their skills as a decorative painter and garden designer to create a welcoming home

FEATURE AND STYLING JILL SHEARER PHOTOGRAPHS HUNTLEY HEDWORTH



A pair of neoclassical black and mirrored bookcases by Julian Chichester can be found in the sitting room, along with a camel-backed Victorian sofa in original needlework.





ABOVE Exotic influences can be found throughout the house, including within the kitchen, where the table is covered with an Indian cotton cloth. For similar, try Chandni Chowk. The Aga and kitchen cabinets were in situ already.

There is something incredibly warm and inviting about David Mendel's and Keith Anderson's Somerset home. A pretty glazed porch welcomes guests into the square hallway of the Victorian villa, where generous proportions along with Arts and Crafts detailing suggest an air of traditional English gentility. The colours are warm and cossetting and, on either side, rooms are filled with an array of handsome pieces and rich fabrics.

Although elegant and replete with an eclectic collection of fine furniture, this is very much a house to be lived in. The sitting room looks set for a convivial gathering: French bergère chairs dressed in silk brocade flank an overstuffed sofa piled with plump cushions upon a Turkish carpet. A pair of grand neoclassical bookcases filled with a fascinating collection of books – further evidence of the wide range of interests the couple shares – look out across the room towards a Scandinavian Biedermeier birchwood writing desk adorned with pictures and curios. Delicate oriental lacquerwork in glossy black and shimmering gold adds a touch of exotic glamour, whilst a profusion of colourful flowers gathered from the couple's garden bursts joyfully from tall vases and a tumble of pink geraniums spills out onto the hearth.

Such a diversity of textures and colours could jar in less-assured hands, but here it somehow all works perfectly. David reveals that the lavish gold silk damask full-length curtains framing the tall sitting-room windows were acquired about 40 years ago and have adorned every house he has lived in since. "They are actually 1930s originals," he discloses. "They are a bit threadbare in places, but they are such good quality."

In the dining room opposite stands a handsome oval table, which at first glance looks to be a fine inlaid Biedermeier piece. However, David later reveals this to be his own decorative handiwork, along with the









ABOVE The side table in the kitchen is an old school science lab bench, which was found at Langport Reclamation.

LEFT The hallway is painted in Almond Shell by Sanderson.

FAR LEFT The garden is a pleasant spot to linger during the long summer evenings. Keith is often away working on garden projects, but he always looks forward to coming home where he can stretch out and relax.



Brightly-hued oil paintings seem to glow, the emerald walls intensifying their colours

ABOVE The dining table was made by the English Joinery Company and has been coupled with Regency oak chairs. Two of David's paintings adorn the alcove walls.

painted faux-linen on the walls, which seems to shimmer in the afternoon light. Brightly-hued oil paintings seem to glow, the emerald walls offsetting and intensifying their colours.

This is a house designed for relaxed entertaining. The proportions feel generous and welcoming, and the overarching impression is one of richness and colour, which is hardly surprising as David has spent much of his working life as a decorative painter. His skilful paint effects are in evidence throughout the house. He trained at Colefax and Fowler and now works for private clients and interior designers doing paint finishes and colour consultancy. He also sells a selection of antique, individually painted furniture.

"I can't stop buying furniture," David admits with a smile. "I'm particularly drawn to nineteenth-century Chinese decorative pieces. Keith's taste is more contemporary, but fortunately the house is large enough to accommodate our different styles. We decided to emphasise the Victorian feel in the main house. The other end was originally a coach house, which we connected to the main house with an orangery/dining room," he says. The former coach house has a more pared-back, open-plan feel with off-white walls and polished concrete floors. "This is the more 'everyday' part of the house, whilst the drawing and dining rooms lend themselves to entertaining," adds David.

The house was built around 1870 as a mid-Victorian villa, however, when David and Keith acquired it 13 years ago, it had been extended and the original Victorian porch removed. "Inside, the decor was very pleasant and neutral – timeless, really," says David. However, both he and Keith knew there would be a significant amount of work to do before they could reinstate its former Victorian splendour. The coach











ABOVE LEFT The chairs either side of the fireplace are covered in a Hodsoll McKenzie fabric. The sitting-room rug is a Maldovian kilim bought in Istanbul.

BOTTOM RIGHT The etched pendant lights in the hallway and landing are from Christopher Wray.

BOTTOM LEFT The circular mirror in the dining room is from Hugo Russell and Company. The console table is a neoclassical Egyptian revival that David painted and gilded.

ABOVE The lamps in the master bedroom were bought from Colefax and Fowler about 40 years ago and have been paired with lampshades from Vaughan.

RIGHT The twin bedroom is painted in Rain Cloud by Sanderson. The curtain fabric is a discontinued design from Colefax and Fowler.

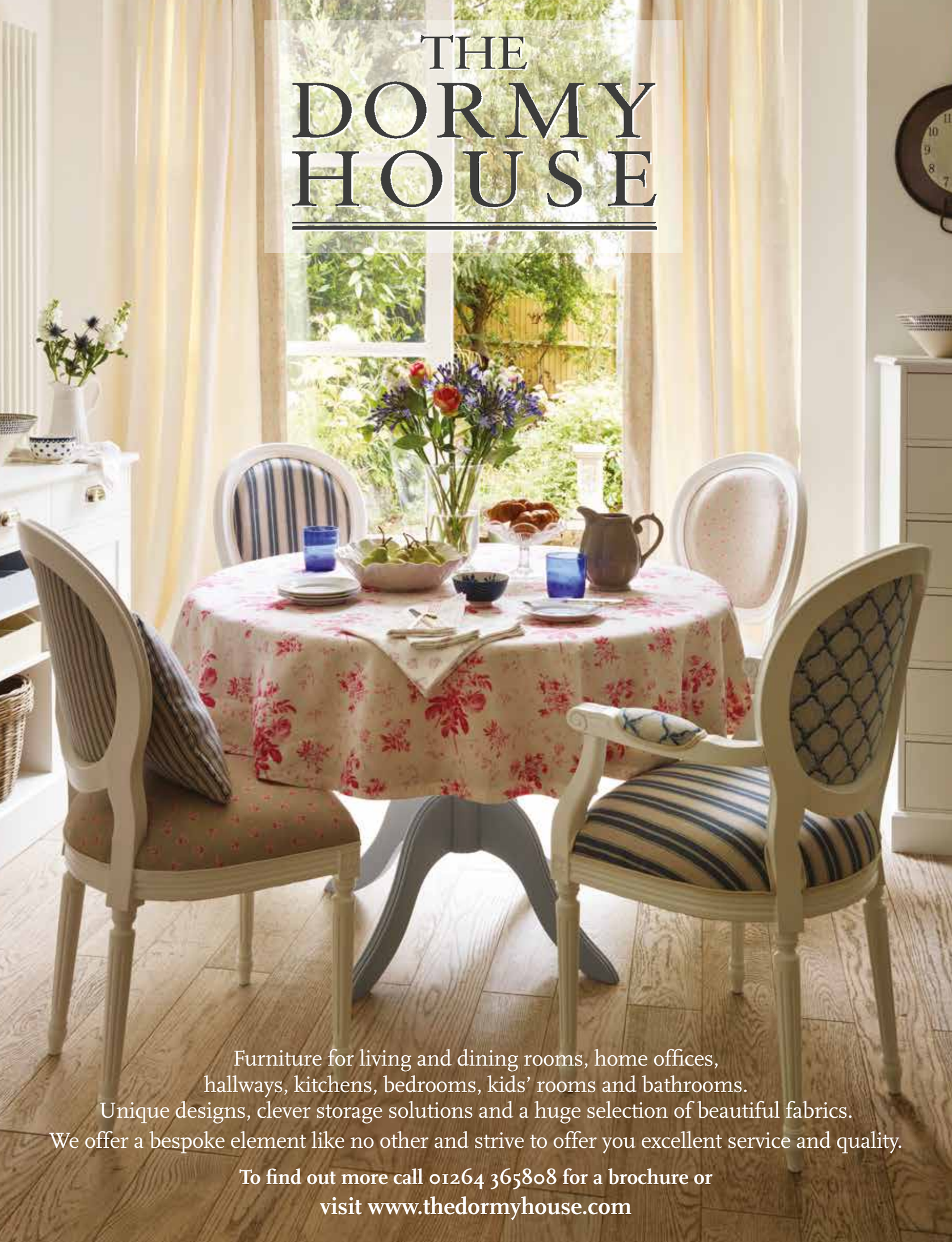
house had been turned into a granny flat with several small rooms, which David and Keith chose to return to the large, simple spaces that imbue the house with a sense of space and light.

They reinstated the original glazed Victorian porch and rebuilt a timber lean-to back hall with stone, to match the architecture of the house, knocking down a stable block which felt uncomfortably close to the house. Unusually, the couple chose to retain part of the stable's walls, keeping a door arch and one of the windows, which is now draped with ivy and Virginia creeper giving the impression of a half-forgotten ruin.

The house came with around four acres including a walled garden, now burgeoning with cottage-garden flowers and terracotta pots brimming with herbs. Despite Keith's work as a sought-after garden designer, the garden here is a joint effort, "Whoever has the most time gets to do the dirty work!" David explains.

It is a charming place with a tranquil, comfortable feel – a successful amalgam of Victorian refinement and relaxed modern living. ■




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AT HOME WITH *Anna Keay*

The director of The Landmark Trust charity, which rescues and restores historic buildings, has her own daunting restoration project at home

When Anna Keay rented a restored fifteenth-century chapel in Somerset for a short break 20 years ago through The Landmark Trust, she never dreamed that one day she would be its director. A passionate historian and author who has worked for Historic Royal Palaces and English Heritage, she now spearheads the charity, which rescues and restores historic buildings and makes them available as holiday accommodation. She lives with her husband Simon Thurley (former CEO of English Heritage) and seven-year-old twins Arthur and Maud.

Where do you live and why?
I live in two places, actually: a very small 1920s mansion flat block in London and a big old townhouse in King's Lynn, Clifton House, which is my heart and home.

How would you describe Clifton House?
It's a Grade I listed medieval merchant's house right in the historic centre of King's Lynn. There are some amazing tiled floors – which were laid in the thirteenth century, with a few fragments from the twelfth century – and a vaulted cellar from around 1350, but the house was all there by about 1400. It's the sort of building that English towns are full of, that people don't really notice: little palaces of their day. It's a brick house right on the street that looks Georgian from the outside.

In Elizabeth I's reign, it had a rather imposing five-storey brick tower built onto it. From the roof, you can see the river down to the sea. The house belonged to wine merchants and ship owners, who could entertain business contacts whilst watching their ships coming in. In about 1700, it was modernised by the architect Henry Bell – the last time anything much was done to it.

How long did it take you to restore it?
We're still doing it – it will take until we die. We have done about 70 per cent, which has taken nearly ten years. It is a labour of love, but you come to realise it's not about the finished thing; it's the pleasure of the process. You save up for every little thing, you discuss it and it's really exciting. We'll be talking about it until we're old and grey.

We found a panelled room, which we didn't know was there, hidden under plasterboard. The panelling was all put up before the Civil War. There have been really exciting moments and poignant little finds:



lost things, such as shoe buckles, that were obviously precious, that just fell out of somebody's hand at some point in the past.

What is it like living there?
Wonderful. It's really cold, which is fine if you know, but a bit surprising if you come to stay and don't realise. There was an icicle hanging from one of the taps. In England, you can buy big townhouses very cheaply because the fantasy is all about the countryside, but living in a town is the most wonderful thing. As it's a big house, we can have lots of family and friends to stay. That is the most precious thing in the world. It's a similar thing with [hiring a property from] The Landmark Trust. Instead of seeing people fleetingly over dinner, you spend proper time together.

What is your favourite room in the house?
I probably love the kitchen most. It's a really big room with south-facing windows and a ginormous table that can seat 20 people. For the children it's fantastic because it's their empire, they are always building tents under the table and scooting through. In winter, instead of getting cabin fever they've got masses of room. My husband built them a brilliant slide down the main stairs.

Do you have any unusual items at home?
We've got a seven-foot-tall stuffed bear. My husband bought him, and the children love him. He's holding my wedding bouquet.

Who has the most say about the decor?
It's totally joint. Historic buildings are our passion – I run Landmark, my husband ran English Heritage – so it gives us such pleasure to have a long discussion about every doorknob, hinge and paint colour. It's a really interesting old house, so it's not a blank canvas. The house guides you.

How would you describe its decor?
Minimalist it isn't! I hope it's a mixture of feeling like a beautiful historic house and somewhere really fun, warm and welcoming. There are a lot of dark colours, reds, greens and browns and a lot of candlelight and rugs. In a big cold house you want thick carpets, thick curtains and open fires.

What is English about your home?
It's a house born of English craftsmanship, so even if there wasn't a stick of furniture, you'd know you were in England. The shape of the windows and stairs, the form of the panelling, it could never be anywhere else.

Do you have any family heirlooms?
In our sitting room I have a lovely sewing table with little compartments that was my grandmother's. Maud is very keen on sewing, so we open it up and discuss threads and what we're going to make.

How much input do you have in the restoration of Landmark Trust buildings?
I'm a historian by background, but part of what I bring to Landmark is a real personal sense of how family life at its best can be in these buildings, not just thinking about it as an intellectual exercise. What you're going to really want to do here is lie on the floor in front of this, or push all these chairs back and dance. We have open fires and candles in nearly all our buildings – it would be so easy to find yourself saying 'on safety grounds we'd better not', yet that would kill one of the great pleasures of being in an old house. The Landmark buildings bring people so much pleasure and an experience of old buildings and history that isn't about reading a textbook or needing to know your kings and queens. It shouldn't be about sitting bolt upright on some terrible piece of Regency furniture feeling cold and uncomfortable.

Finally, what should no English home ever be without?
A bit of French equipment – a mouli cheese grater. You turn a handle and it grates the cheese. My grandparents gave me one as a hand-me-down when I was 20 and it is my most useful bit of equipment.

The Last Royal Rebel, *Anna Keay's biography of James, Duke of Monmouth, will be published in May. Clifton House will be open to the public on 23-24 July from 11am to 4pm.* ■

FEATURE SARAH FEELEY **PHOTOGRAPHS** THE LANDMARK TRUST



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SEATING PLAN

Dining room seating does not have to be restricted to traditional dining chairs. Here, a creative arrangement of a bench, chair and sofas creates relaxed, comfortable seating for ten. This allows the table to be placed closer to the wall, rather than centrally, creating an easier flow and more space in a compact room. *Villandry upholstered furniture in Heron Blue: three-seater sofa, £1,475; two-seater sofa, £985; corner unit, £975; dining chair, £255, all Oka*

FEATURE KATY MCLEAN





Golden GLOW

The popular sunny yet mellow tone of golden yellow bursts onto the scene again as it brightens interiors with its cheerful glow

ABOVE **Golden rule**
A metallic, shimmering finish offers a far more refined look than a matt yellow. Gently catching the light, it provides a bright backdrop without being garish, allowing for a beautiful trailing motif to climb the walls.
Sakura, Yellow Lustre, £82 a roll, from the Archive Trails collection, Little Greene

RIGHT **Winning combination**
Yellow and grey work in harmony to create a balanced and calming combination that is both modern and enduring. Here, yellow provides a radiant canopy on the ceiling and is subtly referenced in the faded golden tones of the fabrics and antiqued golden bedframe. Crisp white and warm greys complete the look for an inviting bedroom.
Ceiling in Concord Ivory; upper wall in Barren Plain; lower wall in Metropolitan, all from £17 for 0.94l Regal Select Matt, Benjamin Moore

We at *The English Home* do not like to follow a trend that might be out of vogue in a few months' time. We believe that decoration should be timeless and seen as an investment which lasts longer than the latest fad. Yellow is a colour that has been in our psyche for a couple of years and its popularity is growing in strength. Dulux has named Cherished Gold as its Colour of the Year for 2016 and pretty golden hues are pervading many new collections in papers, fabrics, tiles and rugs. We believe that this new hue of yellow is more than just a fashion and has an appeal that will last for years to come.

Golden yellows are perfectly partnered by shades of grey or mink that provide a sophisticated foil to their vibrancy. These smart and gentle colour combinations allow for a little playfulness with patterns, whether pretty florals or bold geometrics.

Choosing the right shade of yellow is important to ensure a chic finish. Pale pastels and acid brights are off the menu; instead seek out warm golden tones that offer richness and opulence. Thanks to the colour's popularity, there is plenty of choice for the decorator to create a gorgeous scheme with longevity.





"I wandered lonely as a cloud that floats on high o'er vales and hills, when all at once I saw a crowd, a host of golden daffodils."

William Wordsworth (1770-1850)





ABOVE **Printed patterns**
We were pleased to discover these delightful hand-screen-printed cotton, flax and linen fabrics. Make assorted cushions, or bring cheer to a kitchen table by using them to cover seat pads and as a sprightly tablecloth. *Yellow Harmony fabrics, from £39 a metre, Akin & Suri*

FAR LEFT **Let the sunshine in**
Although yellow works well to help brighten darker corners, it is at its best bathed in sunlight allowing it to radiate its warmth and vitality. A sun-filled sitting room looks glorious awash with golden hues, including on floors, as this lovely rug demonstrates. *Chrysanthemums wool and art silk rug, £388 a square metre, Amy Kent*

LEFT **Mellow yellow**
Mustard shades bring a rich warmth, making yellow a versatile hue to use year-round. Layer wool throws and cushions in these deeper tones to bring cosiness with a classic undercurrent.
Multiblock throw, mustard yellow, £89.95; Naturally Arncliffe throw, beige £75, both Bronte by Moon

OPPOSITE **Fields of gold**
This new wallpaper with pretty meadow flowers is available in four colourways named after the seasons. Reflecting the brightness of springtime, the golden colourway is a versatile choice for any room. The clever use of paper on door fronts is rather smart, too. *Dinner at Eight wallpaper, Spring, £60 a 10-metre roll, Fired Earth*







ABOVE Make a splash
Yellow does not immediately spring to mind for bathrooms, however it is an uplifting choice. The colour is clean and fresh, yet pretty and brings a bright cheerfulness – useful for enhancing a room that might have less natural light and lifting the spirits while getting ready on dreary days.
Lattice encaustic tiles, Sulphur, £3.59 each, Artisans of Devizes

TOP RIGHT Golden threads
Embroidery brings a touch of intricacy and a level of luxury to fabrics. This graduated colour adds a sophisticated texture and depth to this new design and brings just the right golden highlight to a muted scheme. On a linen ground this fabric has a great drape for curtains, too.
Portobello Flower, yellow, £100 a metre, James Hare

RIGHT Cheery disposition
A light, bright, open-plan kitchen-diner with white cabinetry benefits from a dose of colour and some golden rays of sunshine. Combining blinds with curtains offers versatility and an extra level of decoration that helps designate the living space of the room with a homely feel.
Curtains in Harewood, Dijon, from £235 for made-to-measure; Roman blind in Sion, Mimosa, as shown 800 x 1,650mm, £274; both Style Studio ■



FEATURE KATY MCLEAN **PHOTOGRAPH** P74 (AMY KENT RUG) DAVID BROOK


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SPRING COLLECTIONS

Delve into our curation of the newest fabrics and wallpapers chosen to reflect the most important design flavours this year

Previewing the spring collections of gorgeous new fabrics and creative wallcoverings is a highlight of the year. There is a buzz of excitement as swatches pile high on our desks and we coo over sublime textures, intricate detailing and fabulous colourways. This year we have noticed a few strong themes that prevail amongst the offerings; the glamour and beauty of the jazz age pervades many designs with subtle metallics and blush hues; ornate embroidery offers tactile details; soft mineral greys have a broad appeal offering a gentle, chic mood whilst botanical motifs are certainly the most popular designs. We have separated the leafy and floral patterns with an English country flavour from those with a distinctly more tropical vibe – the former providing gentle hues; the latter a bold tonal range of jungle brights. We hope this edit offers flavours to suit different palettes and inspire redecoration this year.

Background fabric: Matra £105 a metre; vases left to right: Aubin, £75 a metre; Taya, £79 a metre; Bresis, £110 a metre. *All Manuel Canovas*

FEATURE KATY MCLEAN







English botanicals

One of the most prolific design directions in the spring collections is botanical motifs, in particular those that reference the English countryside. From woodlands to meadows and country gardens, fabrics and papers are overgrown with sweet peas, chestnut leaves, cow parsley and roses. Sanderson's Woodland Walk collection perfectly encapsulates this theme with embroideries, weaves and prints that feature ferns, magnolias, wild flowers and oak leaves, alongside woodland fauna. Designers Guild has gone full bloom with its Couture Rose range of bright and blowsy painterly fabrics depicting roses, tulips, irises and poppies, printed on cottons and linens. Blendworth also offers vibrant colour palettes, as well as softer choices with designs that echo both English flowers with wisteria and vine leaves, and oriental gardens and hummingbirds. The natural trailing motif of climbing leaves makes a beautiful choice for wallpapers: Brian Yates proffers tree leaves and ferns in subtle metallic finishes with Nashira and Elixir, whilst Lewis & Wood expands its wide-width wallpaper collection with Beech, which helps create a sense of height with its fine branches sprouting upwards. Fired Earth's Secret Garden and Dinner at Eight papers (see page 75) also utilise floral designs.

ABOVE Blendworth's Mystical collection features a range of botanical designs in pretty colour palettes. *Chair in Botanique, £35 a metre, Mystical collection, Blendworth*
TOP RIGHT One of the many lovely woodland motifs from Sanderson's collection. *Blind and cushion in Harebells and Violets, £46 a metre, Woodland Walks, Sanderson*
RIGHT The climbing nature of this tree design adds a sense of height. *Beech wide-width wallpaper, £56.40 a metre, Lewis & Wood*



LEFT Available as a paper and a fabric, Chestnut Tree is a versatile, large-scale print.
Chestnut Tree wallpaper, £66 a 10-metre roll, Woodland Walks collection, Sanderson
BELOW, FAR LEFT The Ambleside collection features hedgerow fruits, meadow flowers and rambling roses amongst the leafy designs.
Assorted fabrics from the Ambleside collection, £14.99 a metre, Prestigious Textiles
BELOW, MIDDLE Soft metallic options bring a touch of glamour to these non-woven textile wallcoverings.
Nashira Collection wallpapers, £19 a metre, Brian Yates
BELOW, RIGHT The new collection from Designers Guild features an abundance of pretty blooms in colourful combinations. For a subtler approach, gentle greys and neutrals complement the set.
Couture Rose cushion in graphite, 50 x 50cm, £85, Designers Guild

















Mineral tones

Gentle mineral greys and silvery blues have an understated prettiness. Although this is a cool palette, that is no bad thing. Mineral hues can bring fresh crispness to a chic interior. Textures and pattern help to avoid a cold feel and the softness of these colours allows them to be used all over walls without feeling overwhelming. This season's collections use greys, whites, silver and delicate blues in a range of different designs. Romo's geometric papers would look lovely for a striking hallway. Zoffany, in contrast, offers a more abstract painterly design, referencing mountains, producing a softly undulating colour across walls. Mark Alexander and Designers Guild both have offerings in the mineral palette, which also cross over to the English country botanicals with floral and leafy motifs, making for a pretty, feminine feel without a blowsy, colourful approach. Sandberg's Raphael from the New York Stories collection also has a botanic motif, in an overscaled design to add a note of drama, which in the powdery grey colour is much more subtle than the livelier natural green. Look, too, to gorgeous textures – Larsen provides a complementary palette of mineral hues in chenille weaves and cotton blends to add tactile depth.

LEFT The leafy motif of this paper would sit well in our round up of botanical designs; we like the gentle impact of the grey colourway. *Raphael wallpaper, £131 a roll, New York Stories collection, Sandberg* ABOVE The Ajanta collection is inspired by 18th-century hand-printed Indian documents and emulates a hand-crafted aesthetic. *Assorted fabrics, from £75 a metre, Ajanta collection, Mark Alexander* TOP RIGHT Selected designs from the 2016 collection. *From £59 a metre, Larsen* MIDDLE RIGHT Romo's Lomasi papers feature printed designs and textured papers, including beaded and embossed vinyls, all in a mineral palette. *Orden wallpaper, Fog, £85 a roll, Lomasi collection, Romo* BOTTOM RIGHT The ethereal effect of this paper was created by using large brushes and special painting techniques. *Sansui wallpaper, Indigo Wash, £90 a metre, Akaishi collection, Zoffany*


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Jungle fever

The tropics have taken over with exotic plants, flowers, birds and animals overrunning fabrics and papers. Hot pinks, reds and oranges naturally suit this theme, but natural greens and blues work well, too. The bold and exotic nature might not suit all tastes, however, the beat of the jungle drums is impossible to ignore as they sound across multiple collections. In addition, Hermès has gone wild with a porcelain collection, Carnets d'Equateur, featuring lions, tigers, elephants and parrots; Christian Lacroix crosses over from fashion to textiles with exuberant foliage designs for Modern Rugs; and Ralph Lauren's new collections have an African influence with zebra prints and rattan furniture.

Tiger-print papers are offered by both Thibaut and Brian Yates in glamorous metallic and muted finishes for a remarkably understated look. The confident might use Little Greene's bold Paradise wallpaper, in the striking Nightshade, for a dramatic dining room, whilst others may approach this jungle outlook more cautiously, using palm leaf prints for outdoor and conservatory furniture. Robert Allen's Apriori, from the Drenched Colour collection, is perfect for a vibrant armchair – be adventurous with the riotous Cassis colourway. (See page 20 for jungle-inspired accessories.)





ABOVE A classic chinoiserie, featuring exotic flora and oriental ho-ho birds, reproduced from a 20th-century archive document. Available in six colourways. *Paradise wallpaper, £131 a roll, Archive Trails, Little Greene*

LEFT A bold and bright fabric, this would enliven a conservatory, or seat covers for outdoor entertaining, to bring a taste of the tropics to an English summer. *Malfa wallpaper, Absinthe, £89 a metre, Manuel Canovas*

TOP RIGHT Another vibrant choice for outdoor living, the Sea Breeze collection is stain and mildew resistant with excellent lightfastness so it can be used for garden and poolside furniture. *Pina Colada, £69 a metre, and Mojito, £60 a metre, Sea Breeze collection, both Osborne & Little*

BOTTOM RIGHT The Amazonia collection is inspired by natural environments, with large palm leaf and palm tree designs in natural tones. Jungle in charcoal greys is rather lovely for a muted option. *Jungle, £59 a metre, Amazonia Collection, Pepe Peñalver at Lizzo*







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Jazz-age glamour

The beauty of classic 1920s and 1930s designs continually resonates in fashion. This year's collections see a heavy influence of the era's geometric motifs, intricate ornamentation and glamorous colour choices. Pierre Frey is at the forefront of this direction, with both its Charleston and Fox Trot collections evoking the hedonistic spirit of the roaring twenties, with a contemporary twist, by using highly stylised designs. Side Car, named after a favourite cocktail of the era, has a coating of glass microbeads to emulate the sequins and spangles that adorned flapper dresses. Although bold colour was often a hallmark of Art Deco designs, contemporary takes, such as those from Altfield and Nobilis, have opted for a subtle nod, using metallic accents to highlight antique pinks, blues and creams. Art Deco has also had a global inspiration, with the exoticism of East Asia holding particular allure – cranes from Japanese art are iconic of this period and feature in Harlequin's Palmetto papers, along with other elements from the jazz age. Luxurious textures, such as Chinese silks, also add to the decadence of Art Deco designs. Rather than aiming to create a look that strictly adheres to the era, today's designs embrace its opulence and character while offering versatile designs with a timeless appeal.









ABOVE Cranes were a popular design in the 1920s and 1930s, evoking an oriental character. Complementary Deco-style fabrics include the appliquéd velvet, Alvar, shown on front cushion. *Cranes in Flight wallpaper, £58 a roll, Palmetto collection, Harlequin.*

RIGHT This wallpaper is covered in beads to create a beautiful shimmer and iridescence. *Side Car, £184.80 a 10-metre roll, Fox Trot collection, Pierre Frey*

FAR TOP LEFT This archive Deco motif from Pierre Frey has been reimagined as a laminated jacquard weave in contemporary metallic colour palettes. *Darius wallpaper, £134.40 a metre, Pierre Frey*

TOP LEFT With a curvaceous design, this wallpaper has a softer approach to Deco style, whilst retaining all the glamour. *Metagraphic Collection wallpaper (MTA30), £80 a roll, Nobilis*

BOTTOM LEFT Luxurious embroidered fabrics with a cloud-like motif in a range of soft pastel and metallic colours. *Adelaide, £312 a metre, Altfield*



Embroidered details

The intricacy of embroidery always adds an extra level of luxury, as well as a highly tactile quality, to fabrics. The new season sees embellishments that are fine and detailed, as well as chunkier stitches and extra adornments such as beading. Anna French's Natural Glimmer collection has a number of delicate embroideries to complement other textured weaves and embellished prints. The embroidery fabrics all feature different leaf and flower designs and come in a pared-back palette of natural linens and whites, with metallic thread highlights. Botanic designs are once again evident in many of the collections, with leaf patterns from Etamine and a host of floral designs from Jane Churchill. Often, collections offer printed versions of embroideries, or a host of complementary fabrics, to allow the more expensive embroidered fabrics to be used for cushions to add texture. However, the scale of the embroidery can sometimes be lost if not used on a large scale. Travers' beaded damask looks spectacular when used for curtains as this allows full appreciation of the level of detail. Clarke & Clarke and Prestigious Textiles offer embroidery details at a lower price point as part of their new collections. Our next issue will feature a special focus on embroidery, with further inspiration and advice on how to use it to full effect.











ABOVE Beading adds an extra dimension to this embroidery. Used for curtains, the full effect of the scale can be appreciated, and also protects the delicate detail from wear and tear.
Beaded Damask, £140 a metre, Travers at Zimmer + Rohde

LEFT Silver threads add highlights to this pretty collection, which features a number of differently embellished fabrics.
Olympus embroidery, £126 a metre, Natural Glimmer collection, Anna French at Thibaut

ABOVE RIGHT A very fine embroidery with a leafy design.
Liesse, £110 a metre, Etamine at Zimmer + Rohde

ABOVE FAR RIGHT Flowers and leaves feature heavily in Jane Churchill's new collections of charming embroidery.
Inglewood, red/green, from £79 a metre, Jane Churchill at Colefax and Fowler

BOTTOM RIGHT The Richmond collection features weaves and embroidery; a versatile mix.
Richmond collection, from £19 a metre, Clarke & Clarke

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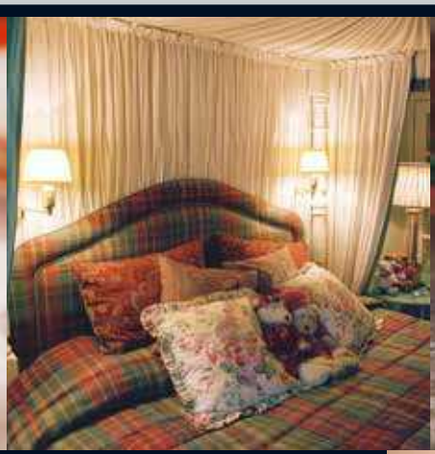
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LEFT Peter Reed was awarded the Royal Warrant in 2008 for making the Queen's bedlinen – a testament to the company's proud heritage of producing fine, hand-embroidered bedlinens from its Lancashire textile mills for over 150 years. Everything is cut, sewn, hemmed and embroidered by hand to create a truly bespoke product.



▲ JEAN MONRO Established in 1981 by Jean Monro, daughter of the celebrated 1920s society decorator Geraldine Monro, this company is renowned for its quintessentially English chintzes and classically elegant archive designs. A Warrant for the Royal Homes and Household Goods was awarded to Jean Monro in January 2010.



▲ COLE & SON Founded in 1875, Cole & Son is celebrated for its extensive range of beautifully produced wallcoverings, many of which are inspired by the company's vast archive. Collaborations with contemporary designers, and the innovative artwork produced by the in-house design studio, ensure that collections are fresh and current whilst remaining faithful to the company's distinguished heritage.



◀ ROYAL BRIERLEY Founded as a family-run enterprise in 1776, Royal Brierley is the longest established name in British glassware, having gained the Royal Warrant in the 1930s. The company now produces a range of traditional and contemporary crystal glassware under the Dartington umbrella.



▲ GP & J BAKER The Royal Warrant has been held by GP & J Baker since 1982, in recognition of the supply of fabrics and wallcoverings to the Royal Household. Since its foundation in 1884 by the Baker brothers, the company has grown enormously and now encompasses a range of internationally respected brands including Lee Jofa, Brunschwig & Fils and Mulberry Home.



▲ THOMAS GOODE From its elegant Victorian showrooms in South Audley Street, London, Thomas Goode has been supplying fine porcelain and bone china to the great and the good since 1827. Queen Victoria and the Tsar of Russia were eminent former clients, and the store currently holds two Warrants to supply the Royal Household. The shelves are replete with a matchless selection of classic heritage brands – from Meissen and Dresden to Baccarat, Christofle and Royal Crown Derby.



▲ HEIRLOOMS A small Sussex-based couture house, this company specialises in beautifully-produced bespoke bed, table and bathroom linens. Clients include interior designers and private individuals – the company has a particular specialism in providing linens for private yachts.



▲ NEJ STEVENSON The Queen's cabinetmaker has been charged with crafting a wide range of beautiful bespoke pieces for the Royal Household – from coat stands to cabinets – since 1992, from its workshops near Rugby, Warwickshire. The company specialises in bespoke furniture for both contemporary and heritage projects.

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▲ C JOHN A dealer in the finest (and rarest) rugs and tapestries, C John is the only fine carpet gallery in the world to hold the Royal Warrant. The Mayfair gallery is stocked with beautiful carpets, dating from the seventeenth century, from all over the world.

▲ WILKINSON Crystal chandelier-maker and restorer Wilkinson has been producing exquisite cut-glass since 1947, but it was a chance visit from an antique dealer, who requested they re-cut some glass to remove chips from an antique piece, which prompted the company's change of direction into restoration. The company now restores many of the Queen's chandeliers.



▲ THOMAS LYTE This modern English luxury brand specialises in beautifully made leather accessories and silverware. Thomas Lyte also makes and restores bespoke commemorative silverware for special events and occasions, for which the company received a Royal Warrant last year.



▲ HYPNOS Reputedly manufacturing 'the most comfortable beds in the world', Hypnos has been practising and perfecting the art of designing and making luxurious made-to-measure beds, in all manner of shapes and sizes, since Edwardian days. Run by the Keen family since its inception, Hypnos has held Royal Warrants since the days of George V.



▲ FLORIS The longest-established independent family perfumer in the world, and the Queen's only Appointed Perfumer, Floris has an extensive range of scented candles and room fragrances. Each scent is personally approved by Edward Bodenham, a ninth-generation descendant of the original founder.



▲ SANDERSON Established in 1860 by Arthur Sanderson, the company is renowned for its excellent quality and timeless, English style. Its extensive archive allows Sanderson's skilled design team to reinterpret historic designs in a fresh and effortlessly English way.



▲ PRICE'S Founded in 1830, by the end of the nineteenth century, Price's was the largest maker of candles in the world. The company offers a vast range of candles – from the everyday to the luxurious – for all manner of occasions.



▶ ROBERTS RADIO With a heritage of more than 80 years, Roberts Radio has been producing radios since 1932. The iconic Revival model was inspired by a handbag belonging to Elsie Roberts, the wife of one of the original founders.

▶ AXMINSTER One of Britain's longest-established carpet manufacturers, Axminster has been carpeting Royal residences since the days of George III. The patented Axminster method allows many different colours to be woven into a single piece, permitting the production of complex designs with an almost infinite number of pattern repeats. The family-run busines is still based in the Devon town that gave the carpets their name.



OTHER ROYAL WARRANTS

From familiar household names to small niche suppliers, the 800-or-so Royal Warrant holders come in all shapes and sizes. However, each one will have supplied the Royal Household with goods or services for at least five years. There are currently three official Grantors of Royal Warrants: HM The Queen, HRH The Duke of Edinburgh and HRH The Prince of Wales (HM The Queen Mother was also permitted to bestow a Royal Warrant during her lifetime). The following companies are just a few of those appointed.

- **Peter Jones** This familiar high-street name – and a flagship store of the renowned John Lewis Partnership – holds a Royal Warrant as The Duke of Edinburgh's official Draper and Furnisher.
- **Robert Kime** Kime first rose to prominence in interior design through antique dealing and as a collector of textiles. His passion for putting beautiful rooms together has earned him great acclaim in the interior design world and a Royal Warrant from Prince Charles.
- **Mikhail Pietranek** A specialist in English and Scottish baronial interiors, and with a full joinery, soft-furnishings and construction team, interior designer Mikhail Pietranek has been recognised by HRH The Prince of Wales for his work in Royal residences.
- **Royal Doulton** The long-established chinaware company has held a Royal Warrant since 1901 (when the 'Royal' was added to the company name), and now holds Warrants from both HM The Queen and The Prince of Wales.
- **Smythson** The iconic bespoke stationer and purveyor of British luxury leather goods holds Warrants from each of the three Grantors – The Queen, The Duke of Edinburgh and Prince Charles.
- **Weldon** Specialising in parquet, marquetry and antique flooring, Weldon's expertise in bespoke flooring, and restoration work in historic buildings, has earned the company a Warrant from both The Prince of Wales and The Queen.
- **Whippetgrey** This bijou online treasure trove of the charming, the practical and the curious is one of The Duke of Edinburgh's chosen suppliers.
- **William Yeoward Crystal** Yeoward's exquisite classically-inspired crystal and glass tableware has been awarded The Prince of Wales's Royal Warrant for supplying crystal to the Royal table.

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Heart of the home

Buying a new kitchen is amongst the most expensive projects one can undertake when redecorating a property, but as it is the creation of the room widely viewed as the heart of the home, this should come as no surprise. Done well, a full kitchen refit can promise a good return for your investment – not only in financial terms, but also in terms of the pleasure and comfort a well-conceived design can bring to daily family life, both from a functional as well as an aesthetic perspective.

Given the level of the investment, it is vital to undertake thorough research to find a kitchen company that not only offers a quality product and service, but really listens to its customers to understand what they wish to achieve. The design process should be completely collaborative; a top-notch designer should be rigorous in assessing exactly what is required in a kitchen that is tailored to your lifestyle, not only now but in the future, too.

If a company offers the opportunity to visit its workshops, do take up the invitation. A visit will offer the truest insight into how each kitchen is made and the level of care one can expect to enjoy as a customer. Take time to discuss and understand the design and construction process, as procedures vary from company to company. How will plans be presented, for example? Will there be a dedicated installation manager to oversee the project? Will the cabinets be delivered ready-built or will they be built on-site? And exactly which costs are – and are not – included in the quote?

It is not unusual for research, planning and fitting a new kitchen to take a year or more, so over the following pages our Kitchen Special aims to help focus your thinking by offering a guide to the questions to ask, the design decisions that need careful consideration, how to integrate high-tech appliances unobtrusively, and the style ingredients to consider to ensure a timelessly alluring end result.

WHAT MAKES A... *beautiful* KITCHEN?

The kitchen has become the hub of the home. Mary Carroll looks at the aspects interiors designers pay attention to when counselling a client on the creation of the ultimate kitchen



Any estate agent will tell you a house with a kitchen in need of renovation is a draw for potential buyers. We all appreciate the opportunity to remodel a kitchen to suit both our aspirations and the way we like to use this important room; and because the kitchen is an expensive room to complete well, taking time to create the ultimate kitchen is essential. If you were sitting in front of an intelligent interior designer, they would ask you how and what you like to cook, how you like to use a kitchen and how you imagine the room to look. So making a list of what you really want from a kitchen is the perfect start to the process. The cook of the house will have a wish list which revolves around cooking needs, but wider lifestyle requirements matter too.

If the kitchen is to be a place for everyone to gather, making a dining room-cum-kitchen requires the whole area to have a flow. What the lighting will be, and where it will be strategically placed, is so important to ensure cooking areas are not highlighted when a more conducive atmosphere is called for around a table.

Kitchen designs have moved on apace, with taller cabinets replacing traditional wall cupboards to give the appearance of the more established furniture of a dining room. They also provide much more visible storage, especially with pullout storage racking systems as part of a design concept. As taller units hold much more, fewer units are needed, giving way to more creative ideas for creating a beautiful kitchen.

So the wish list is about what you need going forward and where you plan to store it. Just as we are enticed by cabinet work, so we may also desire display cabinets or areas to introduce visual displays of things we love and use, such as china and glass. Display cabinets work particularly well if you are including an eating area in the room to keep everything for the table close to hand, otherwise there will be far too much walking around a kitchen for everyday ease of use.

First, consider the amount of space available. If there is plenty of space to work with, then consider hiving off a portion of it for a pantry. Not only is this idea romantic, but a pantry is exceptionally useful and can increase the joy of cooking and creating recipes. You can indulge a love of containers, china and ingredients whilst being able to see exactly what you have at a glance.

Think of the appliances you need going forward. Whilst a steam oven is a must for some, others have recognised the value of two dishwashers to cope with large family numbers or regular entertaining. Is a wine cabinet something you would like to integrate into your life? List the smaller appliances you have – what do you really need on display and which items are only brought out when they are needed? This can be a good time to cull appliances by recognising what you actually use. Tidy cooks who cook a lot like the idea of a cabinet on the worktop with a pull-down door behind which the KitchenAid, blender or even the toaster has a home, but when in use can be easily pulled out onto the work surface.









MAIN William Yeoward's kitchen in the country is the perfect example of how to use colour and fabric to add warmth and character. Image taken from *William Yeoward At Home*, £25, CICO Books.

RIGHT This elegant kitchen design from Studio Alidad has a touch of the Shaker about it only smarter, and would feel at home in town or country.

LEFT This dresser, part of an interior inspired by Devas Designs, provides wall decoration whilst cupboards below can store everyday items for the table. A useful, beautiful choice.





Consider how you really use a sink on a day-to-day basis. Butler sinks are forever popular for the traditional charm they bring to a kitchen. In many larger kitchen designs, a prep sink on an island unit offers another place for easy preparation. Consider too the new boiling-water taps, which put an end to boiling too much water in the kettle each time you fancy a cup of tea.

WARMING FLOORING

If your ideal kitchen is a living space where you also cook, providing a warm comfortable environment is essential, as is planning a heating source early on. When underfloor heating first came onto the market there was some scepticism about what to do if the system failed. But advances have been made at every level and not only is it very efficient, but it has come down in price so is an affordable option.

This extra source of heat makes everything from preparing breakfast first thing to spending a few quality hours baking cakes a real joy. It is important to keep the cook happy and comfortable in a kitchen. The pleasure of a heated kitchen floor should not be underestimated. It also allows more wall space for units since radiators are rarely required as an extra.

Choose a flooring material which really suits your lifestyle and is easy to maintain: you want to be able to clean it easily and efficiently. Do the rounds of a few showrooms to compare the feel of wood to stone. There is also value in considering how much light pours into a kitchen: wood floors bathed in sunlight day after day fade surprisingly quickly. Stone floors can work very well as a transition from the kitchen to an adjoining patio but can be cold without underfloor heating. Additional flooring, such as a large kitchen-friendly rug in the entertaining area, will help to give a softness and informality to the space.

WORK SURFACES

Do not skimp on the quality of a work surface. This is the workhorse of the kitchen and can dramatically alter the final look of the design.

Marble is a wonderfully tactile material and a large expanse provides an accessible roll-out surface for enthusiastic bakers. It never loses its glamour and looks better with age. Honed carrara, with its beautiful grey veining, could be seen as the interior designers' choice. It is wonderfully classic and gives a kitchen an established feel. Granite is more practical than wood, but still needs to be cared for: it really does not like citrus juice and hard water tends to leave white deposits. To keep it looking good it needs to be wiped daily with a spray specifically formulated for the job.

The many ranges of composites are ever more sophisticated and offer the look of marble and other stones but are eminently practical and, in most cases, less expensive. They are being made in thicker options now too, so are able to provide a really substantial finishing touch as a worktop. You do not want a surface you will tire of, whether it is the colour or the finish.

Various metals, such as zinc, have a more utilitarian look and combine well with other materials to add contrast. Zinc can also be used for kitchen table tops, which is practical for family use but not so appealing for kitchen entertaining as it can be noisy and unrelenting.

Whilst worktop surfaces are hard and to some extent robust, never forget they should be treated as any other surface in your home, with care and attention to ensure that you keep them looking their best.



TOP LEFT The functions of this kitchen/dining room are cleverly defined by the choice of pendant lights. Interior designer Caroline Riddell has picked antique-style pendants to add drama to the entertaining area, whilst smaller pendants over the preparation area provide focused lighting which can be turned off when sitting down to share a meal.

Emma Sims Hilditch has incorporated the historical features of Dorset Manor, such as the original wooden beams and ancient stone fireplace, to create a seamlessly classic yet contemporary kitchen.



EMMA SIMS HILDITCH

"Dorset Manor dates back to 1200, and as such, reveals charming historical features throughout. After peeling away the layers of previous decoration, we discovered something of an historical jigsaw puzzle with Norman and Georgian architecture pieced together. This was a delight as we were able to utilise the original wooden beams, stone walls and ancient stone fireplaces, but also introduce a contemporary glazed garden room and this kitchen in the former drawing room. The space was an especially satisfying area to design, as it initially presented a number of challenges in terms of introducing fitted furniture to crooked walls and uneven floors. The solution was to design bespoke cabinets that perfectly fit the space.

We took inspiration from the property's surrounding area for the decorating palette and materials. Colours such as warming beiges were carefully introduced whilst natural materials such as wool and limestone were key to the scheme to complement the original features.

The overall aim was to achieve a result that was both seamlessly classic yet also contemporary in design to suit the location and the lifestyle of the owners."



ABOVE Interior designer Caroline Riddell has skillfully created a casual effect in this country kitchen. Light, airy kitchen design with just two taller cabinets for everyday storage marries so well with the laid-back eating area. The wood worktop used for the elegant island cleverly ties the two areas together.

LIGHTING FOR DRAMA & WARMTH

Once the layout of your kitchen is confirmed, lighting should be the next essential element. It should not only enhance the kitchen, and add drama in some instances, but should also offer general and ambient light to add warmth and versatility to the space. Multi-faceted (or several) lighting circuits will let you change the mood with ease.

Overhead spots are useful when you are cooking. Ambient lighting in seating areas allows flexibility to create a more relaxed feel to this area. With the kitchen lights turned off, the table becomes the focus, with candlelight extending a warm experience.

The experienced eye of the designer will counsel the use of a series of pendant lights over island units or along the length of a table. This creates aesthetically important yet useful task lighting, or for when you want to turn the lighting down and achieve pools of atmospheric light. It looks particularly smart in a row above a table designed to gather around. For this purpose, pendant lights which move up and down work well, allowing you to change the intensity of light flowing downwards. Concealed lighting can bring other areas of a kitchen to life, from lighting a dresser displaying china to setting the work surface off with under-cabinet lighting.

These valuable design elements are not overly expensive yet make the world of difference in creating a warm atmosphere, which is so very hard to create with ceiling downlighters alone.

AMPLE, COMFORTABLE SEATING

Islands work best in kitchens with good proportions and your designer will work out what size fits your design and what it can house. They are so useful as eating areas, particularly for quick informal meals.

A large island can be stepped to provide a table area with regular chairs or, along one edge, bar stools can be the seating choice.

Avoid stools which turn 360 degrees if you like to feel comfortable as you eat. Four legs on the floor and upholstered seats, arms and backs make for comfortable eating: the upholstery details will also allow a tactile decorative element.



KITCHEN SUCCESS

- Starting the design process with well-thought-through must-have lists will pay dividends and provide clarity for the designer.
- Once you have a liveable, functional design, spend time on the lighting for impact and atmosphere.
- Warm up the space with a considered choice for flooring, work surfaces and decorative elements.
- Details count. Taps, handles, splash-backs and shelving should not be left as the last consideration.
- Colour creates interest and warmth. Investigate the many options for varying choices to avoid a bland kitchen.
- Use decorative ideas to add personality and character to the room which in turn will make the kitchen feel at one with the rest of your home.

THE FINER DETAILS

A designer will really help with all the finishing touches. Interestingly, you might think that handles are one of the last choices, but this is another consideration to be made in advance. With a large kitchen you might end up with banks of the same handles, so you might want some cupboards to open without obvious handles. These are early decisions which not only affect the kitchen aesthetically, but will help with everyday use.

Paint colour and finish need careful thought too, as using the same colour everywhere makes for a bland result. A kitchen will be all the better for textural contrasts and accent hues to provide interest and pace to the design. Connecting the colours to the rest of your home is a starting point, or a blue you see in a showroom or advertisement might be your choice. With paint, do as an interior designer would do and paint up boards to see what the colours look like in the room before making a final decision.

Kitchens tend to be painted with some form of eggshell, which always appears lighter than emulsion – worth remembering when working with sample pots. If you do not like strong contrasting colours, many paint brands offer graduations of colour, so it is still possible to create interest and a change of pace with a uniform colour.

FINALLY... ADD PERSONALITY

Yes, kitchens need elements of functionality, but they can also do with a good helping of personality. I often see interior designers cleverly using lighting or window treatments such as Roman blinds to add distinct style to a kitchen design. There should always be a good transition from the kitchen to the rest of your home and it is the personality you apply which will create this synergy. The splash-back is an area where design can play a part, whether antiqued mirror panels, tiles or a decorative wall finish.

When the regular practical appliances within a kitchen are neatly tucked away inside cabinets and islands, the kitchen can shine as a room in its own right. Add to this the warmth you have created at every stage of the design process and the kitchen can truly work as the hub of the home. ■

ABOVE Adding a sense of manor house grandeur, this run of glass-fronted cabinets provides excellent storage. Work surfaces have been cleverly integrated so that a kettle, toaster and mixer have a permanent station. The useful ladder adds charm to this successful kitchen by Ham Interiors.

PHOTOGRAPH P101 (MAIN IMAGE) GAVIN KINGCOME © CICO BOOKS; (BELOW) STUDIO ALIDAD © JAMES MCDONALD. P103 (PORTRAIT) POLLY ELTES. P106 HAM INTERIORS © ALEXANDER JAMES.








SNUGGLING
OVER FOR TREATS
SLIPPERS CHEWING DADNG







The perfect ENGLISH KITCHEN

We consider the timeless pieces which have become synonymous with quintessentially English style







CLOCKWISE FROM FAR LEFT

Work companion
Even in the most space-starved kitchen it is desirable to include a work island or butcher's block. *Ashby Island Unit, £499, Marks & Spencer*

Mix & match
Blending free-standing and fitted, painted and wooden units is key to adding English charm. *Bespoke kitchen, from £30,000 (excluding appliances), Thomas & Thomas*

Colourful dresser
Hand-painted china displayed on a kitchen dresser adds instant character and colour. *Apple Blossom, Carnival Stripe and Strawberry tableware ranges, Susie Watson*

Stone underfoot
Flagstone flooring retains allure for classic, country and contemporary English kitchen settings. *Aged Cashmere Grey limestone, from £72 a square metre, Martin Moore*

Wash in style
A plate rack above a classic butler sink provides an attractive focal point for the washing-up zone. *Pilaster hand-painted kitchen, from £40,000, Smallbone of Devizes*

Focus point
A traditional-style hanging pan rack makes a striking statement in a high-ceilinged space. Bespoke kitchens, *from £35,000, Chalon*

Home by the range
Everyone is drawn to the warmth of a range cooker, particularly the family pet. *Pet bed, from £40, Aga Cookshop*

INSET RIGHT

Country references on linens and tableware add the right note. *Pheasant range from Sophie Allport*

Think of a quintessentially English kitchen, and an image of a room replete with a mix of free-standing and fitted furniture, stone floors, a dresser overflowing with colourful china, all arranged around a range cooker with a dog cuddled beside it, will almost certainly spring to mind.

These timeless ingredients remain much-loved items in a modern-day kitchen – even if current design owes much to historical design precedents set by the needs and looks of food preparation spaces of great English houses.

Visit any historic house open to the public, and one will commonly find wall-hung shelving, pan racks, a large dresser and usually a large central table – all of which continue to find use today. Scale and style may have altered, but essentially the functions remain the same.

In a country-style kitchen, the classic dresser has barely altered from sixteenth century precursors. Although today, rather than offering practical storage for pans, utensils and cookware, it is more likely to be used for an attractive display of vintage china or the prettiest, most desirable pieces of kitchenware from pottery jugs to bottles of artisan cooking oils. Wooden dressers suit a country scheme in oak, cherry or maple. Sleeker modern designs with built-in wine racks and glass, mirror or metal detailing offer a contemporary cousin to the original concept.

The scrubbed-pine table that we recognise (and desire) from Mrs Patmore's kitchen in *Downton Abbey* has become today's work island. Free-standing designs most clearly reference this, but sleeker islands, which fit flush to the floor, still fulfil the role. Modern work islands can serve as chopping areas as well as breakfast bars, and fixed units may incorporate ▸



ESSENTIAL INGREDIENTS

- **The kitchen dresser** This piece allows the display of characterful china and pieces with sentimental value to give an English kitchen personality. Wall-hung shelving emulates the look in rooms where space is precious.
- **The range cooker** Whilst a modern English kitchen may also include a high-tech built-in oven, a range is still the definitive focal point for family, pets and cooks to congregate around.
- **The work island** From Mrs Patmore's kitchen in *Downton Abbey* to large tables in most National Trust property kitchens, this hard-working piece remains a desirable ingredient.
- **Stone floors** This historic choice for a busy kitchen remains timelessly popular today, whether in tumbled limestone, riven slate or sleeker, honed stone alternatives.
- **A family pet** Most would say that no quintessentially English kitchen is complete without a hound or cat (or two) cuddled up in their own bed beside a colourful range cooker.

a dishwasher and sink. Even in tiny kitchens, many seek to find space for a butcher's block on a stand, topped with a maple or beech chopping surface. A different colour paint finish is often desired to help magnify this focal point.

Another colour focus is the range cooker which, despite our modern love of high-tech, still has a magnetic charm. Great British brands include Aga, Esse, Falcon, Rayburn and Britannia. Rangemaster is the world's oldest manufacturer of range cookers; its first design, the Kitchener, was invented in 1830 and shown at the Great Exhibition in London in 1851. A whistling stove-top kettle seems an essential accompaniment – for sound as well as stylistic benefit.

With its inviting ambience, the English kitchen has long been the heart of the home. Little wonder, then, that many seek to accommodate a dining table. It is not always possible today to find space for a refectory-style table (which has its origins in the long tables used for dining by monks in the Middle Ages), but wooden designs in all shapes and sizes, with a lovely patinated finish, remain desirable. They look timelessly classic when surrounded by rush-seated chairs or iconic Windsor chairs with sturdy saddle seats and spindle backs, especially when set upon a gently worn flagstone floor – the most romantically English choice.

When it comes to smaller fixtures for this look, pieces such as plate racks and hanging pan racks continue to be popular. Nostalgia for the idea of a separate pantry has spawned the increasing popularity of free-standing larder units in homes which do not have the luxury of a separate room. These units offer ample storage for produce with a combination of shelves and drawers, as well as compartments on the interior of each door.

Finishing touches are key, and for a quintessentially English kitchen, colour is a must. Inject colour with painted cabinetry, pretty printed fabrics for Roman blinds and seating and a plethora of colourful tableware and pottery. ■



TOP
A pastoral setting
What could be more quintessentially English than a kitchen-diner complete with rustic oak beams, a ledged oak door and an inviting table. *Kitchen created by Border Oak, designers/makers of oak-framed houses*

MIDDLE
A gathering place
A large scrubbed wooden table has been desirable in the English kitchen for centuries, originally for food preparation but now for informal family meals. *Kitchen walls decorated in Feuille wallpaper, £97 a roll, Farrow & Ball*



BOTTOM RIGHT
Rise & fall
A ceiling-hung drying rack is a period design that retains a useful function in the modern home. It is commonly fitted over a range to benefit from rising heat. *Ceiling clothes dryer, £60, Garden Trading*

BOTTOM LEFT
Capacious storage
A large free-standing unit that works as a larder or storage for crockery can add gravitas to a kitchen. *Cabinet part of the Shaker hand-painted kitchen range, from £30,000, Simon Taylor*





CHARLIE KINGHAM

Cabinetmakers



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Combining traditional-style kitchens with the perks of modern-day life creates the perfect cooking environment. This Cook's Kitchen from Mark Wilkinson won the Classic Design Award in 2014. *Prices start from £40,000, Mark Wilkinson*



Modern life in CLASSIC SETTINGS

Complement elegant room design with the latest high-tech appliances and gadgets designed to make kitchen chores easier

Many of the latest kitchen cabinet designs are based on traditional proportions and colours: think of Shaker styles in natural wood finishes, painted country-style dressers and larder cupboards. However, these classic designs still need to be able to work harmoniously with some of the latest high-tech kitchen appliances to avoid a disjointed overall aesthetic. Some items can be hidden: integrated dishwashers are designed to be disguised with a cabinet door, for example, whilst it may be possible to position laundry equipment in a separate utility area. Refrigerators and freezers can also be hidden, but some may prefer to have a focal-point American-style fridge-freezer, which can sit well alongside a classic range cooker. The latest extractors are discreet, too – with downdraft models descending into the work surface.

COOKING INNOVATION

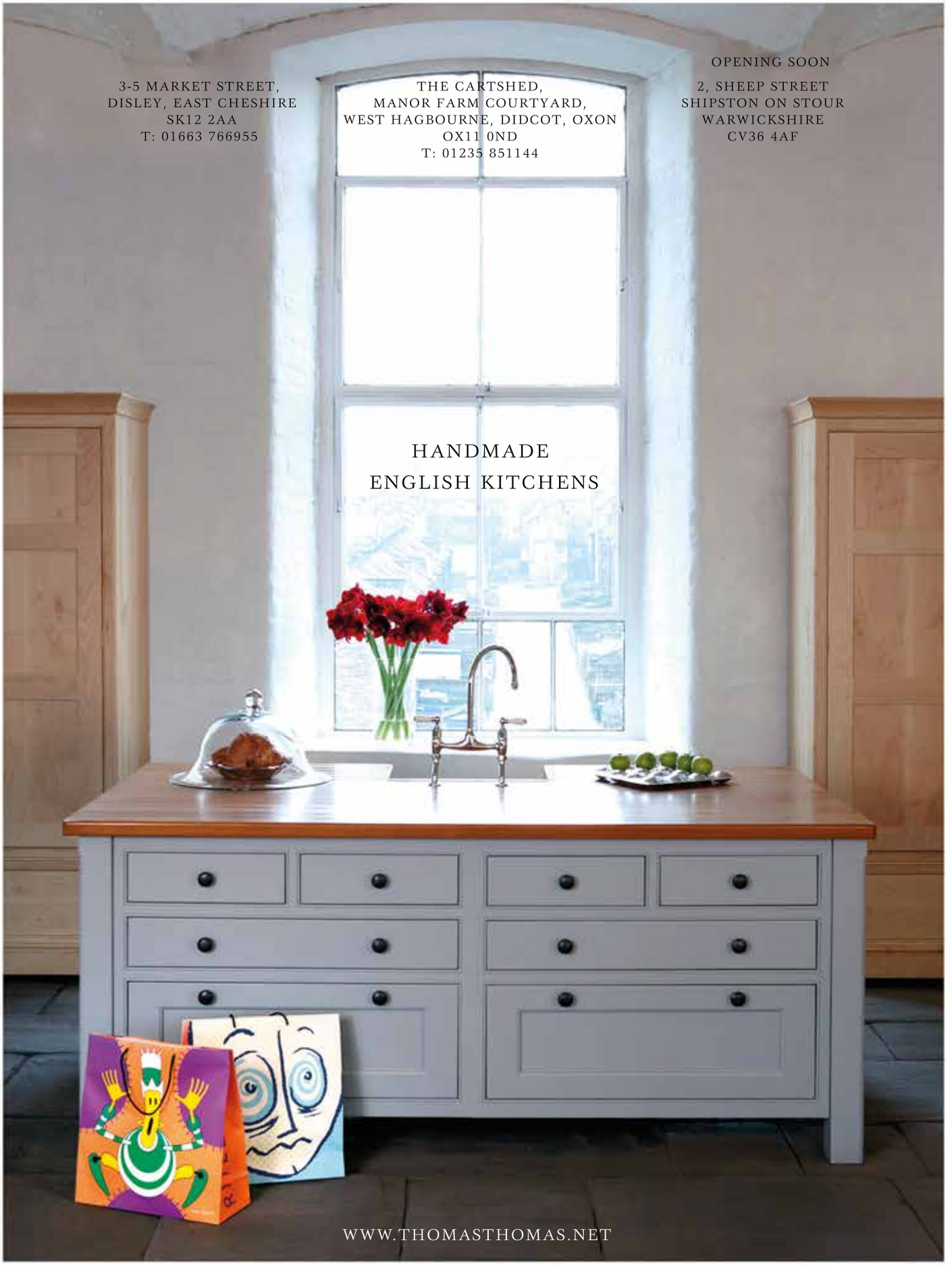
Whether preference is for a standard range cooker, a heat-storage model or a sleek built-in design, opt for the highest specifications for top performance and energy efficiency. Some heat-storage range cookers, such as the 100i from Everhot, are available with induction hobs, providing the best of both worlds.

For programmable high-tech control, consider the Aga Total Control range cooker. It is available as a three-oven or five-oven model, with remote-control and programmable facilities to enable the ovens to be turned on or off for one or two cycles per day. If space is at a premium, the Openspace oven from Hotpoint may be a good choice. It looks like a single oven, but clever design has allowed a generous 77-litre capacity. It can accommodate four full-width shelves and can split into two horizontal sections, effectively allowing it to function as a double oven. Another clever design is the 74-litre capacity MaxiKlasse single oven by AEG, with a 25 per cent steam capacity, for about £675.





TOP A multi-function range cooker from the new Le Creuset range of colour by Steel offers flexible cook tops, including a lava stone. *From £3,690, Bradshaw Appliances*
BOTTOM The Openspace 0SHS89EDC built-in single oven can also be used as a double oven. *Around £559.99, Hotpoint*



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From 82.92, Sensio

KITCHEN LIGHTING

Do not fall into the trap of spending vast amounts of time and effort planning every inch of a kitchen, but leaving the lighting scheme to the electrician. Good lighting not only makes a huge difference to the look and atmosphere of a kitchen, but it also affects its functionality. Therefore, lighting must be addressed at the beginning of a project, along with the positioning of taps, plug sockets and electrics.

In- and under-cupboard lighting can look smart, especially if teamed with glass shelves and cabinet doors. LED lighting is cost- and energy-efficient, as well as flexible and decorative. Strip LEDs along shelf edges, or tucked under plinths and work surfaces, add a new dimension to a kitchen, whilst spotlights and downlighters can become focal-point features. Flexibility is key.

For sophisticated automated systems, look to companies such as Custom Controls, Crestron, Lutron and UK Automation.

One recently-launched product is the LIFX Colour 1000 light bulb, which can instantly improve a dull lighting scheme. It is a screw-in bulb that can be screwed in in the same way as a normal bulb, but once the app has been downloaded and linked to the wi-fi system, it can be adjusted to provide myriad coloured lighting for a lovely effect.

For a good overview of individual kitchen lighting elements, visit the Sensio website.







COOLING TECHNOLOGY

Fridges and freezers are ever more innovative, and now include interactive models with wi-fi capacity. The best-known is the wi-fi-enabled Wizard range from Hoover (this includes oven, dishwasher, extractor, washing machine and hob), which allows homeowners to programme and time appliances from a smartphone or tablet. New ideas from the Smarter brand include a Smarter Fridge Camera and Smarter Mats, used within the cupboard or refrigerator to help monitor the contents, either by snapshot or connection to a smartphone. For practical purposes, a freezer with ice and water dispenser, or with a filtered water dispenser in the refrigerator, is desirable, but remember that this will impinge upon food-storage space. Touch-control models, such as those by Samsung, are, for the most part, simple to use and give precise control over temperatures. They will also alert when a filter needs to be replaced. The Samsung H-Series RS7677FHCBC model, priced around £1,250, includes an external LED display panel that will tell homeowners its temperature and whether a filter needs to be changed. It will also dispense water and ice at the touch of a button and can be set to holiday mode for when homeowners are away.

The latest range from Liebherr, BluPerformance, has a SmartDeviceBox for wi-fi connectivity and control, and is also ultra-efficient; rated at either A+++ or even surpassing this top energy-efficiency class by an additional 20 per cent, with a rating of A+++/-20%.

LEFT The BluPerformance Premium fridge-freezer is rated A+++/-20%. It has the optional of a SmartDeviceBox for wi-fi connection. *Around £1,499, Liebherr*

TOP RIGHT The 100i has the facilities of an electric heat-storage range cooker, using around 50 per cent less energy than comparable range cookers, but with the advantages of an induction hob. *£7,225, Everhot*

BOTTOM RIGHT This wine-storage cabinet sits flush with a matching fridge and freezer. *ICBIW-18, £7,080; freezer column, £8,400; fridge column, £8,640, all Sub-Zero*









TOP LEFT Keep kitchens streamlined with a four-in-one tap that can supply cold and boiling filtered water. *Omni tap, from £1,349, Franke*

TOP RIGHT The G6995 SCVi K20 dishwasher has exclusive Knock2open technology and can perform at 38 dB. *Around £2,150, Miele*

BOTTOM RIGHT For coffee luxury, try the first smartphone-connected bean-to-cup coffee maker. *PrimaDonna Elite, £1,499.99, De'Longhi*

BOTTOM LEFT The DD931 BK integrated induction hob and downdraft extractor is a futuristic choice, with a frameless bevelled glass hob. *From £3,321, Caple*

DISHWASHING

One of the best and most dynamic new features to be introduced to the world of dishwashing is the exclusive Knock2open technology from Miele. This technology allows the dishwasher door to open automatically after being tapped twice, which could be a useful feature for busy cooks who have their hands full.

There is also a 'press and release' handle-less door model available from Smeg, the DI6013NH-1. In an open-plan kitchen, it is important to choose models with low noise levels, so look for quick programmes and low decibels, ideally under 40dB.

TABLETOP & GADGETS

There is a host of complex and unusual kitchen gadgets available. Amongst the most recent are the Smarter iKettle, which can be switched on via a smartphone from the warmth of the bedroom, in readiness for the first cup of tea or coffee of the day; the Plantui Smart Garden, which provides fresh herbs without soil; and the smart Pantelligent frying pan that will announce, via an app, when it has reached the optimum temperature for the dish about to be cooked. Some of these ideas may seem to be a little fanciful at the moment, but it depends upon an individual's personal level of comfort and ease of use with technology. Those who are *au fait* probably think nothing of switching on the coffee maker via their iPhone whilst they wait for the remote-controlled shower to warm up before springing out of bed. ■



ABOVE The iKettle 2.0 has keep-warm and wake-up modes, amongst others, all connected via wi-fi. *£99.99, Firebox*

RX Nutribullet, £199, High Street TV





Steama, £29.99, The A Range



Evolution 200 waste disposal system, £540, InSinkErator

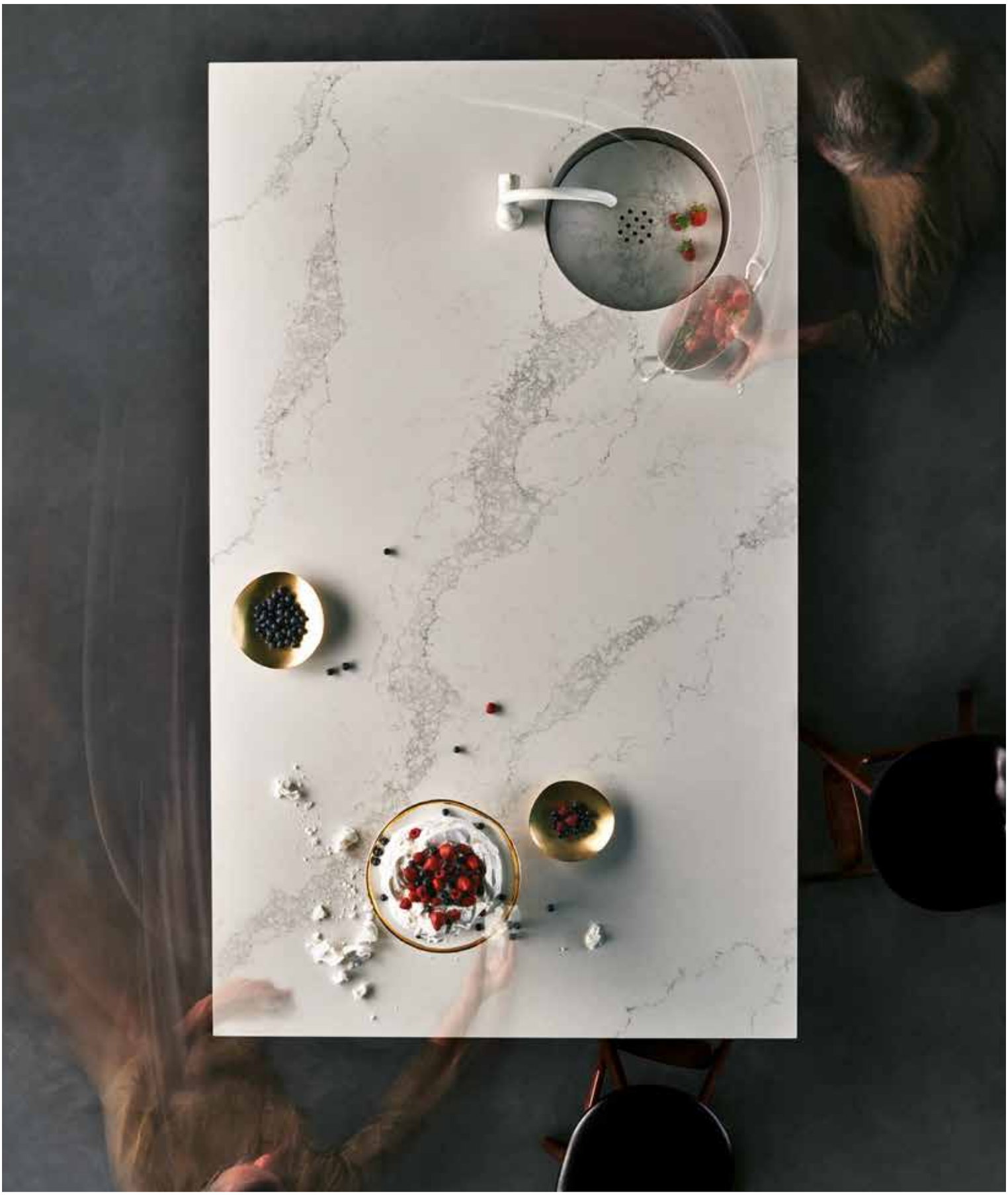


Smart Garden, from £120, Plantui



Drop Scales link via wi-fi to the Drop Scales and recipe app, £79.99, Lakeland

FEATURE LINDA PARKER



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Recipe for SUCCESS

Industry experts reveal their suggestions for creating a stylish and practical kitchen that truly serves as the heart of a home

RIGHT An oak worktop is durable, attractive and tactile. *Kitchens start from £35,000, Chalon*

BELOW A curved cupboard can make use of an awkward space and create a natural flow. *Kitchens from £35,000, Davonport*

OPPOSITE In this Canterbury kitchen, hand-crafted oak contrasts with painted cupboards and granite worktops. A circular oak island has hidden storage and a solid chopping block. *Kitchens from £35,000, Davonport*



WORKTOPS FOR ALL SPACES

Sarah Picton, senior design consultant, Chalon

"There is a vast choice of kitchen worktops on the market, all with unique properties that offer different levels of water-wear and heat-resistance. Granites, slates and composites are available in a wide range of colours, markings, thicknesses, finishes and profiles.

In order to choose the best worktop to suit the function, start by dividing the kitchen into four zones: cooking area, sink, food preparation and storage. Solid hardwood tops provide a tactile, organic and durable surface for working areas. By constructing them with finger joints – in which the staves are bonded together to increase the surface area for glue – they will be extremely stable and strong. Hardwood surfaces require an initial programme of sealing, using Danish or linseed oil, after which a quarterly application is recommended to protect them and to maintain their inherent beauty.

Granite is possibly the best choice of all natural materials for around sink and cooking areas, as it can withstand high temperatures and is impervious to most stains (wine and citric acids must be cleaned up at once)."







INCORPORATING CURVES

Richard Davonport, managing director, Davonport

"We pride ourselves on our curved cabinetry and we find curves to be a very popular feature; around 80 per cent of our kitchens have curved elements. Whether it is a barrel chopping block or curved cabinets on the end of a run of cupboards, it is possible to include curves in both bold and subtle ways.

Convex or concave, the best curved furniture features 'true' curves, in which the joints are perpendicular to the radius of the curve. Using this method, rather than fixing straight joints onto a curved surface, avoids compromise to the integrity of the structure.

Curves can be incorporated across a full range of kitchen styles. Whether the kitchen is classic or contemporary, curved cabinetry creates a spectacular focal point and encourages natural flow in the room. Introducing curves into an otherwise very linear kitchen presents a design diversity that heightens the luxurious, bespoke feel of the space, whilst also making it a more comfortable and ergonomic room to use. From individual doors to elliptical islands, curves can be designed and made in all shapes and sizes."



ABOVE Fired Earth's free-standing Bastide kitchen furniture is hand-crafted from oak and available in ten standard painted finishes (including Bone White and Antimony, as shown above) and in three oak finishes. Worktops come in a choice of lava stones and oaks (graphite and washed oak are shown above). *Kitchens from £12,000, Fired Earth*



FREE-STANDING KITCHENS

Rob Whittaker, creative director, Fired Earth

"Free-standing kitchens are incredibly versatile and have a particularly relaxed and eclectic feel. They are perfectly in keeping with the general trend for flexible, open-plan living and they can evolve over time, depending on your family's changing needs.

For example, if more storage space is required, a cupboard or some shelving may be added in the knowledge that it does not have to perfectly match the rest of the kitchen. It is easy to reconfigure the space around a new piece of furniture, too.

Painted and wooden finishes can be mixed and matched with a wide range of worktops, tiles and accessories to create a completely different look, from a classic farmhouse kitchen to a more contemporary design. Free-standing kitchens are amazingly adaptable in this respect. It is even possible to incorporate favourite elements of a free-standing kitchen – perhaps an armoire or a butcher's block – into a fitted kitchen."



PLANNING A LARGE KITCHEN

Peter Humphrey, design director and founder, Humphrey Munson

"At first glance, it is easy to assume that planning the layout for a large space is easier than for a small one, but that is not always the case. In order to create a harmonious and calm feel, there are three key considerations.

Firstly, and most importantly, a large, open-plan kitchen needs to have carefully considered zones in order to satisfy the multi-use requirements of the space. These might include cooking, food preparation, dining, entertaining, helping children with homework, having coffee with friends, dealing with emails and so on.

Secondly, proportion is everything when it comes to planning the layout for larger rooms. In a kitchen with huge windows and very high ceilings, for example, we would design extra-large free-standing pieces to be perfectly in proportion to the scale of the space. A key piece is often a large island, which acts as a central focus – a multitasking space that is suitable as a food preparation zone with masses of worktop space, a breakfast area and a social hub, too.

Lastly, always consider the sight lines at eye level from key views and entrances, and keep visual clutter to a minimum. However busy our lives are, it feels calming to walk into a beautifully designed space."











DESIGNING A KITCHEN ISLAND

Kiran Noonan, marketing director, John Lewis of Hungerford

"As well as providing a fantastic amount of storage, preparation and worktop space, the kitchen island is used for the family to work, eat and entertain on – it must be versatile; it is important to make sure that it works with the size of the room. Check that there is a minimum of 90cm walking space all the way around, but no more than 1.2 metres – if the measurements do not match these, you will either dwarf your kitchen with an island that is too big, or not make the most of your space with an island that is too small. Provided these walk-around requirements are met, islands can work in any layout. They are able to incorporate seating, hobs, sinks, wine coolers, worktables, butcher's blocks and bookcases. From handy, in-built, removable trays to integrated drawers, their storage and usage options are never-ending.

A design feature that many people overlook is the placement of electrical sockets on an island. Pop-up sockets on the worktop can be practical, but might draw away from the overall style. For a more discreet look, try placing sockets on the end panel."

ABOVE A huge island acts as a multitasking hub and its generous proportions will complement the height and footprint of the room. *The Spenlow kitchen, starting at £35,000, Humphrey Munson*

LEFT John Lewis of Hungerford's worktables can also act as kitchen islands; integrated into fixed kitchen islands; set into long runs, or simply placed as stand-alone pieces. *The Shaker kitchen range, from £25,000, John Lewis of Hungerford*

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WELL THOUGHT OUT LIGHTING SCHEMES

Matthew Payne, kitchen designer, Harvey Jones

"Lighting schemes are an essential part of kitchen planning, as there is nothing worse than a dimly lit work area. Position spotlights directly above key areas to ensure the light is not blocked whilst standing at the sink, hob or worktop. Utilise under-cabinet lighting to illuminate work surfaces, whilst a lit extractor can provide lighting for the cooking area. Lights can also be fitted within drawers and pantry units to switch on when a cupboard or drawer is opened.

Consider the balance between task and mood lighting. Using dimmer switches on the main lights can help create a glow for evening entertaining. LED lighting is a great way to achieve both cool and warm tones. Whether to enhance a modern scheme with blue plinth lighting, or to create a warm and comforting glow, LED can set the desired mood.

Ensure the tone of the lighting reflects the colours of the furniture and the room. For example, cool-white lighting has a faint blue tinge and thus is more suited to whites, greys, blues and other cool colours or tones, whereas warm-white lighting is more yellow and is suited to creams, yellows, browns and earthy tones."







MAKE THE MOST OF OPEN STORAGE

Helen Parker, creative director, deVOL

"Open storage is a great way to make a kitchen feel both personal and original. Instead of keeping your collections of favourite things hidden away in a cupboard, you can organise them and put them on view for all to enjoy. What is more, displaying things that you need to get your hands on daily is a highly practical way of decorating your home; it is an organic fusion of function and aesthetics. Even everyday items, such as bowls or wine glasses, can be stored and displayed at the same time – a lovely sight to see.

Keep shelves looking beautifully simple by not overloading them. Whether it is linens, food, crockery or glassware, neat rows or stacks will always look good. Just a few select pieces can be changed every once in a while to keep the look fresh and interesting.

Creating simple, organised storage may be as obvious as using a dresser or shelving above a worktop, but you can also use your imagination and make really clever use of forgotten spaces such as alcoves, turning them into an invaluable place to store your things."

ABOVE The Original Kitchen features delicate detailing, including beading on the cupboard doors and drawers, as well as an ornate cornice to create timeless charm. *Kitchens start from £18,000, Harvey Jones*

LEFT Neat stacks of everyday crockery can be stored on open shelving for decorative effect as well as practicality. *The Real Shaker Kitchen, from £8,000, deVOL*

FEATURE KATHERINE SORRELL **PHOTOGRAPH** P118 ROB WHITTAKER © TIM JAMES/THE GRAY GALLERY



CHOOSING MATERIALS

Katie Fontana, creative director, Plain English

"There are no hard and fast rules about choosing materials for a kitchen. It is a combination of practicality and appearance, but it is not always necessary to prioritise practicality – designing a kitchen is an affair of the heart. In my own home, I have a zinc worktop, which marks really easily, but I love it, so I don't mind the patina.

Contrasting colours and surfaces always work well. Dark worktops are striking with a cream-painted kitchen, whereas if wooden worktops are chosen, it would be best to avoid pairing them with wooden cupboards. Pale tiles look wonderful contrasted with dark cupboards. Handles, too, can be used as tonal contrast.

We have recently been experimenting with using different textures of paint in the same colour – it is amazing how different gloss and eggshell look. The effect is reminiscent of 1930s kitchens, when wall paints were quite powdery, so everything at low level was painted in gloss for protection. Repainting cupboards and changing handles is one way to achieve an interesting effect."



LEFT Spitalfields cupboards painted in Chocolate gloss and eggshell by Little Greene. *Kitchens start from £60,000, Plain English*
BELOW LEFT Martin Moore's English kitchen combines free-standing and fitted pieces. This dresser's bi-fold doors conceal a sink and appliances. *Kitchens start from £35,000, Martin Moore*
BOTTOM This oak and painted-wood kitchen was designed for a restored Arts and Crafts house, with features such as handmade wrought-iron handles. *Similar kitchens from £45,000, Podesta*





CONCEALING APPLIANCES

Richard Moore, design director, Martin Moore

"Whether a kitchen is large or small, concealing appliances has two distinct benefits. The first, and most important, is aesthetic. Hiding technology away enables designers to create continuous runs of cabinetry. Now that our kitchens have become more open-plan and one of our homes' central living spaces, it is good to give cooking zones a warmer, less mechanistic look by concealing appliances when they are not in use.

The second benefit is efficient space planning. A bespoke kitchen designer will always look at the architectural bones of the room, considering features that can be used to tuck appliances out of sight – say, in a chimney breast, recess or under-stairs area. Large appliances, such as ovens, can be concealed behind pocket or bi-fold doors that give full-width access when open."



KITCHENS IN PERIOD PROPERTIES

Matt Podesta, owner, Podesta

"When designing a kitchen for an older property, take inspiration from the architecture of the period – the new kitchen can carry on from where the architecture leaves off, with joinery that complements the way the original architect saw things and what was fashionable at the time. This is where a bespoke design will come into its own. The idea is to reinterpret for modern living, rather than copy exactly, looking at things like room proportions, windows and decorative elements such as skirting boards, ceiling roses, and depth of panels.

More generally speaking, putting a kitchen on legs tends to give it a more period style, whilst taller-than-average cupboards will emphasise high ceilings (as well as providing useful storage space). Panelled, beaded and tongue-and-groove cupboard fronts suit period properties much better than flat fronts, and free-standing elements such as a baker's table enhance the overall effect." ■





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ABOVE The Vermont is a classic double fireclay sink from Fired Earth. Made in the UK and priced £727.20, it can be bought separately or as part of a kitchen design. A smaller double sink and single bowl are also available. ABOVE RIGHT Abode's Aspekt range of inset sinks is manufactured from a composite material in either White Granite or Black Metallic Granite, with options for a single or 1.5 bowl, with or without drainers. Priced £415 for this 1.5 bowl version.

SINK INTO STYLE

A hard-wearing sink is one of the most practical elements of a kitchen design, and there are a variety of styles and sizes available to suit every need

The sink is an integral part of any kitchen design, with a range of materials, styles and sizes to choose from. Often an afterthought, it is in fact one of the most hard-working elements, needing to be robust enough for everyday wear and tear, whilst complementing its surroundings.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Traditional timber furniture and Shaker kitchen designs suit the classic ceramic butler or Belfast sink, whilst more contemporary kitchens work well with a stainless steel, slate or composite sink. "Consider the aesthetics of the sink within the surrounding elements," says Emma Pryse-Jones, design manager at Plain English kitchens. "What should the sink be made from – copper or stainless steel perhaps? Cast iron, which may chip, or a ceramic sink, which may not be the most forgiving, but looks so much prettier? How easy the sink will be to keep clean also needs some thought, as does the size of bowl or bowls. Think about its position within the room and accessibility. A sink needs to be in a comfortable space with sufficient worksurface around it, and a nice view does not go amiss either."

OPTIONS AVAILABLE

Classic butler and Belfast sinks made from fireclay ceramic have a timeless quality and enduring appeal and are hygienic and easy to clean. The only drawbacks are that they tend to be heavy and require bespoke cabinetry. "If space allows, a double sink is always useful," adds Rob Whitaker, creative director at Fired Earth, "but since butler sinks tend to be quite deep and substantial,





ABOVE LEFT A second, circular sink provides a handy preparation area in an island unit or utility room. The Classic Round design from Shaws of Darwen can be inset or undermounted into any solid surface such as granite, slate or wood and costs £285. ABOVE For something a little different, the Eclectica Chateaux sink is a luxurious handcrafted 14-gauge copper design from Brass & Traditional Sinks. Extremely durable and ideal for adding warm tones to wooden worktops and cabinetry, it is priced £1,736.40.

even a single bowl should give plenty of room." A bow or fluted front adds interest. Stainless steel sinks suit all styles of kitchen and come in a wide variety of designs, with inset and undermounted styles. They can scratch easily, however, and water marks will need regular cleaning.

"When it comes to composite," explains David Thacker, marketing manager at Rangemaster, "expect incredible durability in a variety of designs, including smooth sculptural sinks as well as more classic models with grooved drainers and generous bowls. These are also available in different colours such as black, white or stone, allowing them to be easily matched with different cabinetry and worktops."

SIZE WISDOM

"The most common size of sink is a one-and-a half bowl," says Steve Cole, managing director of Perrin & Rowe, "though single, double and even triple-bowl options are becoming more popular. More audacious models, such as bar and gourmet sinks, deep preparation designs and bow-fronted models, are becoming more commonplace, all of which come in different sizes and materials."

TECHNICAL TERMS

David Dare, CEO at Shaws of Darwen, explains the difference between butler and Belfast sinks. "Our Belfast is an original British-made deep Victorian model with traditional integrated weir overflow, while a butler is an elegant and compact design suitable for kitchen or utility room."

When deciding between an inset or undermount, an inset sink sits within the worksurface with the rims and frame resting on top, whereas an undermounted design is installed beneath the worktop and is only compatible with solid surfaces such as granite, composite or wood. The grade of stainless steel used is important as it affects the overall quality and durability. Steel gauge is the thickness of the steel used, so always check before purchase.

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

Luke Shipway, product manager at Caple, says alternative materials, such as granite, are making their mark. "These have the beauty of natural stone," he says, "but can be moulded into various shapes. The Geotech versions we sell are made of around 80 per cent natural materials and manufactured using low energy consumption. Highly durable, cut and scratchproof and even heat and burn resistant, they are also easy to clean. Some of this range has enhanced poreless technology, which helps prevent microorganisms from settling and ensures dirt and bacteria are easily wiped away."

A growing trend for 'workcentre' sinks incorporates integrated bins, sliding chopping boards, accessory holders and waste disposal, saving valuable time. ■







TOP Carron Phoenix's Adelphi 150 stainless steel sink is perfect for achieving the on-trend look of a flushmounted design. Priced at £316. MIDDLE Metal finishes bring a touch of luxury. This Normandy handmade hammered-nickel design is a farmhouse apron sink, which costs £9,959.76 at Waterworks. BOTTOM Perrin & Rowe's Butler 600 is a classic fireclay ceramic design, handmade in England using the traditional slip-cast process. It costs £364.68.

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

In addition to the kitchen specialists already featured, here are yet more reputable companies to help you achieve your bespoke kitchen refit

ARTICHOKE

Founded 25 years ago by creative director Bruce Hodgson, Artichoke prides itself upon having a particular focus on bespoke design for large country houses and a great attention to the period detailing that this requires. The company workshops, based in Somerset, service clients in London and much of the South of England. Fitted interiors are also created alongside luxury kitchen design.
Tel 01934 745270; artichoke-ltd.com

CHARLES YORKE

From contemporary high-gloss to traditional hand-painted units, using a range of sustainably-sourced timber – including pale maple through to rich walnut and honeyed oak – Charles Yorke offers a wide range of style options from its workshops in Nottinghamshire, working with retail studios across England, Scotland, the Channel Islands, France, Portugal, Russia and the Czech Republic.
Tel 01623 756080; charlesyorke.com





CHRISTOPHER PETERS

Established in 1986 by Christopher himself – who draws experience from over 20 years of working with antique furniture and has a strong knowledge of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century design – this is still very much a family business with a personal touch. The showroom is in Leamington Spa and the studio and workshops are located at Brandon Lane, Warwickshire.
Tel 02476 303300; christopherpeters.com

CLIVE CHRISTIAN INTERIORS

Taking pride in the creation of statement, luxury kitchens, Clive Christian has been designing and installing bespoke interiors, including dressing rooms and sitting room storage, since 1978. The prestigious showroom is located at Design Centre, Chelsea Harbour and showcases a selection of both contemporary and classical interiors options. Handmade in Britain for homes around the globe.
Tel 020 7349 9200; clivechristianinteriors.com





COTTESWOOD

From kitchens to bootrooms, and even wine cellars, Cotteswood has been designing, making and installing furniture for 30 years. The company also makes and supplies a comprehensive range of tables, chairs, stools and built-in seating. All the furniture is made in Cotteswood's factory in Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire using timber from responsibly-managed forests.
Tel 01608 641858; cotteswood.co.uk

PLAIN ENGLISH

Creating luxury hand-crafted kitchens from workshops in Suffolk, but working with customers around the world, Plain English specialises in using the principles and techniques of cabinet makers from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Designs include waxed wooden drawer runners and wicker baskets, amplifying a Georgian style aesthetic. One can also visit the showroom in Marylebone, London.
Tel 01449 774028; plainenglishdesign.co.uk





SMALLBONE OF DEVIZES

Smallbone of Devizes has been designing and making furniture for kitchens, bedrooms and bathrooms for homeowners around the world for over 35 years. It delights in being at the forefront of kitchen design – creating new looks that are in tune with the way we live our lives – most recently with the Brasserie Kitchen, for kitchens that act as social hubs as well as functional spaces.
Tel 020 7589 5998; smallbone.co.uk

STONEHAM KITCHENS

Established 150 years ago, Stoneham Kitchens has had five generations of the same family's commitment to craftsmanship, and also enjoys a Royal Warrant, held since 1995. The kitchens are handmade to order at Stoneham's modern factory in Sidcup, Kent, and the ranges include both stylishly avant-garde and beautifully traditional designs. Retail stores are spread across England and Scotland.
Tel 020 8300 8181; stoneham-kitchens.co.uk





TEDDY EDWARDS

The Teddy Edwards brand is an offshoot of Kitchen Architecture's sophisticated offering and embraces the warmth, colours and traditional charm of country life for its design inspiration. It offers three hand-crafted ranges: Goodwood, Silverstone and Brooklands, and has won awards for its high-end design. The showroom is based in Oxford.
Tel. 01865 404960; teddyedwards.co.uk

THE WHITE KITCHEN COMPANY

Specialising in traditional, hand-crafted wooden kitchens, The White Kitchen Company delivers handmade cabinets in pure white, perfect for a classic look, or ready for you to exercise your freedom to paint your kitchen any colour you wish. The painted cabinets are made in solid hardwood with lacquered oak interiors and solid oak dovetailed drawers that open on Blum runners.
Tel 01604 821003; thewhitekitchencompany.com





THOMAS & THOMAS

Howard Marshall and Robert Entwistle met and founded Thomas & Thomas in 2001. Between them, they have over 60 years of experience in designing, manufacturing and fitting handmade kitchens. Their passion is to create beautiful bespoke designs that set an inviting yet practical setting for modern-day home life. The kitchens are hand-crafted and primarily hand-painted designs with a timeless aesthetic.
Tel 01235 851144; thomasthomas.net

TOM HOWLEY

This brand might be best described as specialising in a look for modern elegance and predominantly light and airy painted kitchen designs. Its tailored design service takes projects from concept to final completion and the resultant kitchens come with a ten-year guarantee. There are 11 showrooms to visit to view the range and enjoy a consultation.
Tel 0161 8481200; tomhowley.co.uk





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Embracing COLOUR

Elevate interiors to the next level with simple but effective colour updates to give rooms a new lease of life

PHOTOGRAPH © LOUPE IMAGES/POLLY WREFORD

Take a tip from the design professionals and consider interiors at the most detailed level to achieve polished end results. A lick of paint, the addition of some bold buttons, a strip or two of vibrant trim, or a little bit of reupholstery, can all add a fresh perspective to pieces which have become lacklustre with time. Just a few smart, new details can refresh and revive rooms with minimal effort and keep a home feeling up to date.

MAGNIFYING IMPACT *(left)*

This pretty twist on a traditional dresser, filled with vintage china, makes best use of the decorative effects of such plates and offers a feminine and softly contemporary alternative to the expected display. With the plates generously spaced and carefully arranged so that no single colour palette dominates, this is an idea that would work equally well in a kitchen or orangery, as well as in a less formal dining room.

BOLD BUTTONS *(top right)*

Just as quality buttons can give a facelift to a tailored jacket, so covered buttons can also add a dash of colour and character to a plain piece of furniture. Here, an armchair is given an injection of personality with multi-coloured buttons in fabric of the same cloth as the base upholstery. Single-coloured buttons would offer a smart, less playful option. This same idea could transfer to a footstool, bolster cushion, sofa or headboard. The Headboard Workshop, for example, offers a complete bespoke service: buttons, crystals, antiqued buttons, can all be tailored to client specification, along with piping in contrasting colours.

- Mix textures – silky buttons against matt cotton or luxury velvet against linen
- Blend light and dark – picture raspberry-red-buttons on a mink ground or white buttons on Delft blue.
- Consider buttons as a decorative feature on curtaining at the base of triple pleats on a heading

Chair upholstered in Pronto in Wicker; cushion in Pronto in Pink Gin, £35 a metre, Linwood

COLOUR WASH *(bottom right)*

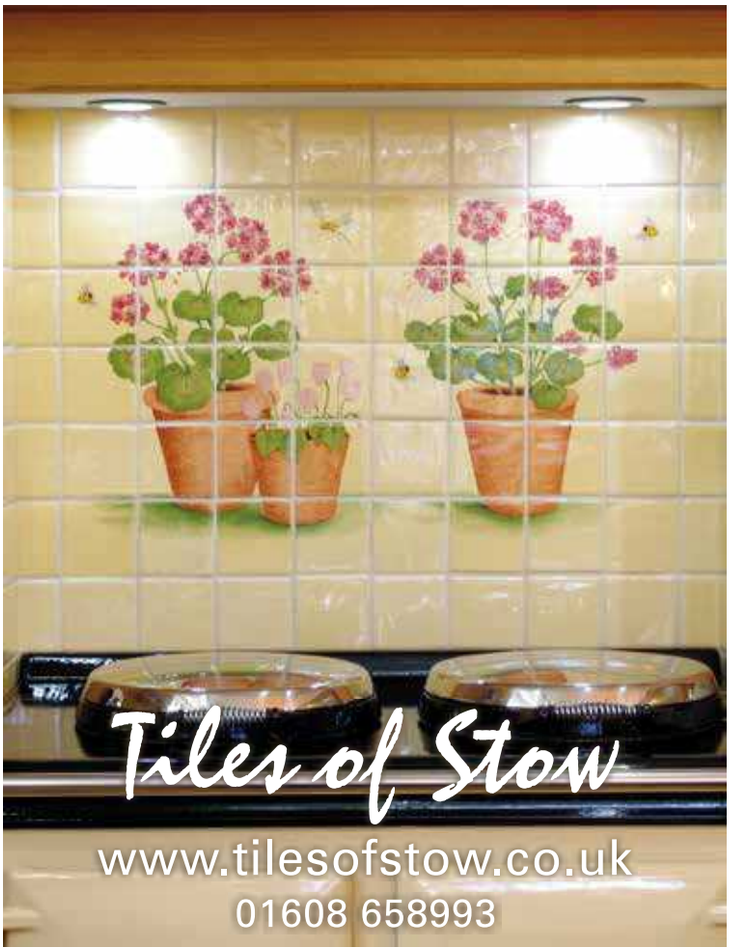
A vibrantly patterned lampshade, or a pair either side of the bed, can an add an immediate lift to a scheme for very little effort. Pleated shades in Suzani prints from Pooky, Guinevere or Melodi Home are all alluring options for a more bohemian look. Or go for a slightly more contemporary take on English-country style with a shade covered in digitally printed fabric, recreating the beautiful watercolours of fabric artist Fiona Douglas at Bluebellgray.

Wood and marble lamp base, £187.50, Holly's House. Tassels, £9 each, by Jessica Light; Tetbury Linen Lampshade, £70, both Bluebellgray









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BOLD & BEAUTIFUL (*above*)

We spotlighted the re-emergence of passementerie as an important decorative ingredient in interiors some four years ago – now it is widely used – not just for classical design, but for contemporary twists, too. Fabric brands such as Harlequin, Baker Lifestyle and Zoffany have expanded their own collections to tempt with many ways to use trim. Here, the design team at Oka has embellished flowing drapes on a four-poster bed with saffron yellow to perfectly complement the cushions and give the bed itself a rich, modern finish.

Tuvalu King Size Bed in Gunmetal Grey with mattress, £2,590; 100 per cent Linen cushion cover in Ochre, £29; Montigny glass table lamp in Violet (base only, shade separate), £359; Corsini glass table lamp (base only, shade separate), £385; Cosimo desk hand-painted distressed grey, £1,895, all Oka

A QUESTION OF SCALE (*left*)

Breathtaking artwork has long been a desirable way to add colour and impact to a room. Investing in original pieces you love will always bring joy. Taking the idea one step further, Surface View offers the chance to have a painting scaled up and printed onto wallpaper to turn a formerly nondescript room into a work of art. Collaborations with museums and art galleries offer a wide variety of designs to suit most tastes.

Lago Maggiore Mural, from £60 a square metre, from the Royal Academy of Arts collection, Surface View

PAINT & PAPER (*top*)

Alluring wallpaper designs are, increasingly, tempting homeowners away from plain painted walls, as the new spring launches aptly demonstrate (see page 79). But paint still plays an important role in tying a scheme together. Here, a beautiful archival print featuring delicate birds has been revisited. The teal accent hue in the wallpaper has been echoed in a bold paint treatment for the bookcase in which shelf backs have been given a colourful facelift. Shelf displays can be made infinitely more enticing when given a suitably dramatic backdrop.

Great Ormond St c1890 wallpaper in Parchment, £82 a roll; dresser painted in Hammock 38 and Marine Blue 95, £38 for 2.5 litres, Absolute Matt Emulsion, all Little Greene. Giogio Writing Desk, £995; round green pleated vase, £30, both Graham and Green. Brass planter, £38.75, Holly's House. Medium Lignum fold bowl, £42; Small Lignum fold bowl, £30, both Another Studio. Other items: stylist's own

TACTILE TRIM (*middle left*)

The addition of a rug can bring new style underfoot when laid on plain carpet, wood or stone. But it need not mean opting for a boldly patterned design. A new range of tactile felt rugs from JAB comes with a choice of attractive edgings, including fringes of merino wool, nubuck leather and cavalry cloth. A bold fringe adds definition and the colour can be chosen to pick up on other accessories to tie a scheme together in a sophisticated way.

Felt Affairs collection of carpets and rugs, priced from £197.50 a square metre, from JAB Anstoetz

LIGHT FANTASTIC (*middle right*)

Occupying a high-level position in any scheme, pendant lighting offers an important opportunity to add visual drama at eye-level or above. A boldly coloured chandelier can add breathtaking impact in a double-height hallway, a row of colourful pendants brings intimacy above a dining table, but equally a brightly painted utility light can bring a burst of style and colour to a kitchen. Here, a hot orange paint finish is chosen to stand out dramatically against classically elegant blue walls to bring a contemporary note to a country scheme.

Station Burnt Orange Large Pendant with opal glass diffuser, £135, David Hunt Lighting

FRAMING EFFECT (*bottom*)

An ornate braid trims beautifully wallpapered walls: aligned around the entire border of wood trim and door architrave to magnify a framing effect. Professional application is highly recommended. Samuel & Sons usually advises designers to defer to its workroom's expertise as application methods will vary. While glue works for thick tapes, it may bleed through if thinner and become visible on the front of the tape. The finish of the wall may also affect which method of affixing would be best.

1.25in Aurelia Ombre Border in Sapphire, £29 a metre, Samuel & Sons









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Each April, lilac trees paint the view with myriad purple, star-shaped flowers, culminating in clusters of striking colour. These plants flower from April into May and, although fleeting, their pretty blooms perfume the spring garden with a delightful, light fragrance.

Easy to grow, they are hardy plants that flourish in most soils and need little attention; just be sure to prune after flowering.

FEATURE SUZANNA LE GROVE **PHOTOGRAPH** © IVZ/ISTOCK

ROOM TO ESCAPE

An outdoor room can be more than an occasional space to spend time in fair weather. Two homeowners invite us into their outdoor rooms, which provide a holiday mood and multi-purposes, come rain or shine



FOR WORK & PLAY

A SEASIDE PAVILION

Becky Bettesworth is a vintage print artist who lives in Devon. She uses her bespoke wooden pavilion from Easter to October to enjoy an unrivalled view of her cottage garden.

Behind the cream-and-white façade of Becky Bettesworth's typical Victorian seaside villa, one steps through a door in the garage, and into an utterly charming bespoke summerhouse, awash with colour. The inspiration came from a sign. An artist, she had long admired a 'Torbay Tea Rooms' sign, which belonged to an old Torquay hotel. One day she spotted that it had been thrown into a skip, so asked if she could have it. The colourful stained glass sparked a bright idea, and Becky drew up plans for a bespoke summerhouse that would capture a nostalgic seaside mood.

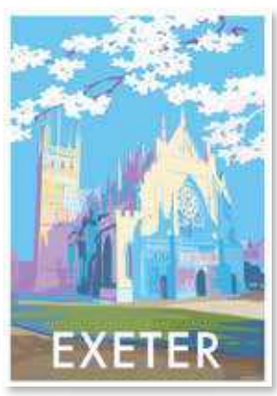
"We had our lovely outdoor area built a couple of years ago," she explains. "We use it to entertain, for quiet solitude or as a work space. My family and I love spending time outside, so we wanted somewhere we could be in the fresh air without worrying too much about our erratic English weather. The 'tea room' is situated on the terrace overlooking the back garden. I designed the area according to the space available and a local builder carried out the work. The building is a wooden tongue-and-groove structure, about three metres by four metres in dimension, and it is open to the garden on two sides, with architrave details adding to the character to make it look like a railway station. The 'tea room' gets its name from the salvaged sign, which is the focal point on the wall. There's a long bench underneath it, a big table and a few chairs.











FAR LEFT Off-white painted tongue-and-groove panelling around the 'Torbay Tea Room' sign is reminiscent of traditional English seaside decor.

LEFT Sweet treats and pretty tableware make a perfect match for tea time.

ABOVE Becky's atmospheric travel prints and seaside posters can be found at beckybettesworth.myshopify.com



"The interior feels very light with an English country flavour. It is painted off-white and there are lots of pastel pinks, greens and blues. I've used soft furnishings to bring together the ice-cream colours, in the form of printed fabrics, comfy cushions, and bunting strung from the walls. I often take out some of my dainty vintage china for lunch or afternoon tea. I'm a big car-boot sale forager, and I love old pieces with a history, so nothing is identical. In the summer, I'll decorate the table with little china milk-jugs or old cut-glass vases, filled with whatever's flowering in the garden, so it always feels informal and fun, too. In the evenings, we have the fairy lights on and candles glowing and it is just so cosy and pretty.

"The room can be a quiet spot for working, or just sitting and thinking. It is away from the phone and emails, so it is a perfect retreat for sketching and thinking about the designs for my vintage prints. It is also a great entertaining space for lunch, afternoon tea or an evening meal with friends and family. On hot days, the summerhouse provides a shady place to sit, whilst on summer nights, the candles and twinkly lights make it quite romantic.

"We use the room from Easter through to October, which really extends the summer. It has lighting, heaters and power points for music and laptops, so we can use it for multiple functions. I've even got some white shower-curtains that hang quite prettily at either side of the open walls, and they are useful to close at night to keep mosquitoes away!

"I love spending time in the 'tea room' – whether I'm on my own or with friends and family – it feels like a treat. I enjoy being able to use the garden, even when the weather isn't perfect. Sitting in the summerhouse, drinking a cup of tea or in the midst of designing one of my posters, I can look up and see the hills and trees, so the view is beautiful and very calming," Becky concludes. ■

ABOVE The 'tea room's' bright decor ensures an uplifting mood whether it is used in spring, summer or autumn.



FAMILY HAVEN

THE LUXURY SHEPHERD'S HUT

Interior designer Katharine Pooley cherishes her shepherd's hut retreat; a beautiful space which proves that traditional hideaways need not be rustic or compromise on style.

Tucked discreetly behind a group of trees, on the outer edges of Katharine Pooley's beautiful Oxfordshire estate, stands a dreamy shepherd's hut. In winter, you can see smoke curling from its diminutive chimney. In summer, the door sits open beckoning you into the perfect picture of a romantic retreat. The acquisition of a shepherd's hut was inspired by a memorable weekend away. It has, as you would imagine, given Katharine's professional expertise, the most sophisticated and carefully planned interior – featuring a sweet kitchen, a wood-burning stove and a fabulously comfortable double bed.

"It's a place where we go to think and get inspired, where the children love to play and, occasionally, where my husband Dan and I go to retreat. We initially stayed in a shepherd's hut called Molly Dish Washer (visit *mollydishwasher.com)* and it was a lovely glamping experience, which inspired us to have a shepherd's hut of our own," Katharine enthuses.

"I used the same principles which I would use on any other interior project. The most important practical consideration was spacial planning, due to the tight dimensions of the shepherd's hut. I wanted the space to be comfortable and indulgent, which is aided by the fabric walling and the selected antiques. I scoured antique markets for the right pieces that spoke to me, and that would work best in the small space available. I wanted the colour scheme to be soft and gentle. The fabric-covered walls and the ceiling canopy give a feeling of cosiness.

Renata Righi, design director at Katharine Pooley architectural and interior design, assisted with the interior design of the shepherd's hut. She explains, "The shepherd's hut was purchased in 2013 from a company called Artisan-Workshops. We set to work transforming the hut straight away, alongside Artisan-Workshops. It took us a couple of months to design the space and order the exact fabrics and materials. We relied on the workshop to make all the major items as bespoke pieces, designed precisely for the space. To make sure everything was designed correctly, we talked in-depth to the makers and used scale drawings. Artisan-Workshops took care of the fitted furniture, and made sure that the bed, which sleeps two people, was exactly the right size for the dimensions of the shepherd's hut.

"We selected muted tones for the decor, to give the space a soft and cosy feel. We used sisal carpet on the floor as we wanted to choose a carpet that was seamless, and had a country feeling. As Katharine has mentioned, she choose the accessories herself, and she opted for tonal accessories that worked together and gave the space a homely feel.

"Katharine wanted to achieve a sense of tranquillity but also a feeling of cosiness and fabric is the best way to achieve this. Fermoie has a wonderful range of hand-printed fabrics and this range offered the perfect blend of colour and texture to achieve the desired end result."

Katharine concludes, "The shepherd's hut provides us with an escape from the real world. It is absolute total peace, tranquillity and contact with nature – which, for us, is very important. To sleep in the shepherd's hut is exhilarating: it is wonderful to be woken up by nature." ■













ABOVE The matching fabric canopy, curtains and walls work in synergy to provide a warm cocoon.

BELOW The shepherd's hut looks out upon uninterrupted countryside views, from fields in the foreground to tree-lined hillsides in the distance.

FAR LEFT The shepherd's hut is positioned away from the house to ensure seclusion.

MID LEFT A wood-burning stove keeps the hut toasty and warm, even if the weather outside is inclement.

LEFT The white-painted kitchen is bright and cheery.



FEATURE ANNABELLE GRUNDY AND SUZANNA LE GROVE PHOTOGRAPHS FOR FIRST CASE STUDY © COLIN POOLE





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GARDEN RETREATS

Much more than the sum of its parts, a shepherd's hut, summerhouse or permanent outdoor building is a cost-effective way to gain an extra room

The benefit of an outdoor room is not just creating extra space; positioning a room in the garden makes it feel like a haven from daily life, a little taste of the holiday mood and, therefore, a wonderfully relaxing space that can be used throughout the year.

HOMELY HUTS

"Shepherd's huts capture the mood of yesteryear, giving a nod to a time when we were at one with the outdoors," believes William Vickery, owner of Blackdown Shepherd's Huts.

In terms of design, originally shepherd's huts were twelve feet long by six feet six inches wide, but modern shepherd's hut companies can make larger versions. "Shepherd's huts can come with oak or metal-clad exteriors, both of which respond well to all seasons and weather. The metal-clad huts are extremely durable and resilient, whilst the aesthetic of the oak-clad huts – which are again very durable – creates a faultless finish," explains Vickery.

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

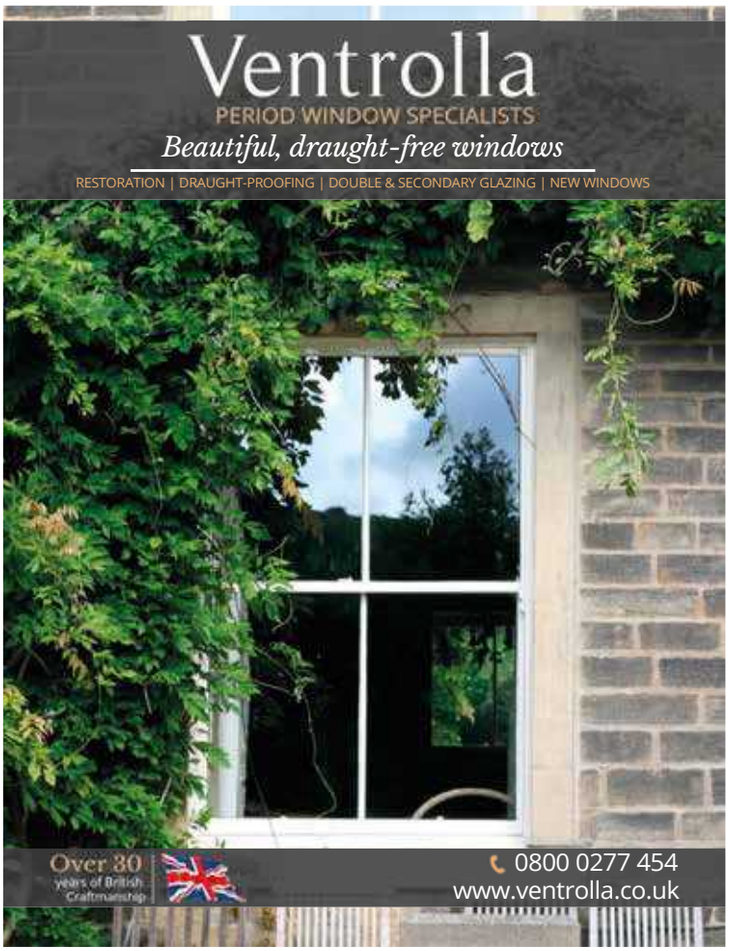
As the view is an important aspect of being inside a shepherd's hut, windows and doors should be positioned to make the most of the best aspect. If pondering where to position a hut, Richard Lee, owner of Plankbridge shepherd's huts, points out that it needs to be on level ground, or at least on a level base.

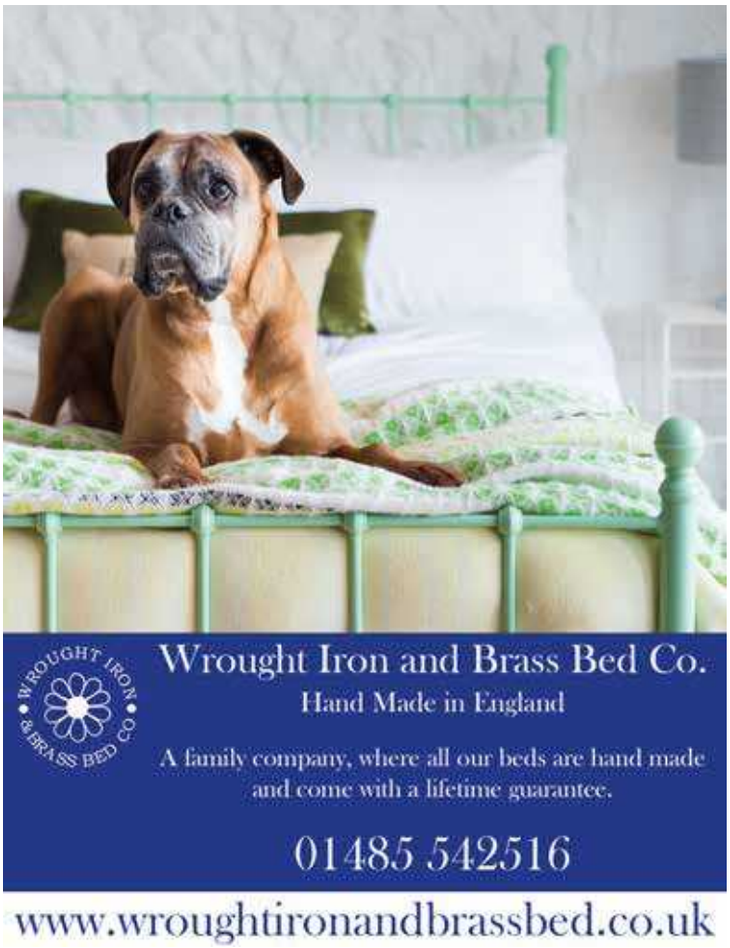
To make the most of the space, think of flexibility with the layout, such as seating that can be transformed into a bed, "or even removed completely to create



TOP This 'heritage hut' houses a space-saving pull-out day bed and a solid-oak folding desk. Bespoke features can be added. *Bespoke huts from £16,500, Blackdown Shepherd's Huts*

ABOVE The far wall in this hut transforms into a bed, complete with mattress. *Bespoke huts from £10,000, Riverside Shepherd's Huts*











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ABOVE Be sure to install adequate locks on all the doors and windows of your summerhouse. If there are valuables inside, it is worth installing a camera and alarm system for additional peace of mind. *Garden rooms start from £17,195, Crane Garden Buildings*

room for a party," advises Lee. Insulation is also important. It is sensible to choose double glazing and filled cavity walls. Some companies use breather membrane and a vapour barrier too.

To make sure the hut can be used year-round, warmth is vital and shepherd's hut companies will usually offer a range of heating choices: "A woodburner is a nice touch, and a very low level of, say, three or four kilowatts is more than enough," Lee reveals.

YEAR-ROUND SUMMERHOUSE

Historically, summerhouses were used to relax in, away from the sun's heat. Jamie Townson, owner of HSP Buildings and Summerhouses, explains how their purpose has evolved, "Today, a summerhouse is often thought of as another part of the home, but being separate does provide a number of advantages: it may be somewhere to escape to, to relax in and enjoy a different point of view of the garden – or increasingly a place to work, entertain or to exercise."

When choosing the position for a summerhouse, Carl Hooper, sales manager at Crown Pavilions, recommends a site consultation to assess considerations. He emphasises that most sites are viable, even if the ground is not flat, but that it would increase costs to make an uneven area suitable to build upon. It is worth checking with your supplier how much initial ground preparation the company provides.

LONG-TERM INVESTMENT

It is popular for summerhouses to be made from timber. "We prefer hardwoods for longevity," Townson suggests, "although these are generally more expensive than softwoods. The roof covering is also very important; sheet lead is difficult to lay but provides a beautiful and hard-wearing finish. Tiles are available too, in a multitude of different colours and finishes."

Hooper points out: "As with your home, heating is important to gain year-round use, but apart from that, our garden rooms are built to withstand the elements." Townson suggests "Windows should be double glazed and wall panels should be insulated, preferably using a modern foil-backed panel. Most importantly, the roof should also be insulated, because that's where most of the heat loss occurs."

Stoves, radiators and underfloor heating can be easily installed during the building stage. "The installation team should be able to hide cables by running them through the structure to provide a professional finish. Final connection to the mains must be installed by a qualified electrician," adds Townson.

Hooper concludes that future use should be thoroughly considered. "It may seem trivial, but the only regret I have heard is, 'We didn't buy a big enough one'." ■

Look out for our special section on Outdoor Living and Garden Rooms in the next edition.





TOP Paint woodwork in natural hues. *Henley range, from £6,366, Chelsea Summerhouses*

MIDDLE Independent annexes can be used year-round and add value. Check if planning permission is required for outdoor buildings. *Oak garden structures start from £20,000 for a simple open barn, Border Oak*

BOTTOM Doors and windows may need maintenance but quality cladding should last years. *Shepherd's huts start from £16,521 for a classic hut, Plankbridge*



FEATURE SUZANNA LE GROVE

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GARDEN NOTES

Garden inspiration from the team on our sister title, *The English Garden*



Pastel shades

Few blooms reflect the British springtime like magnolias. Their goblet-shaped flowers grow in a variety of pretty shades, from the palest cream to cherry-blossom pink, adding beautiful pastel hues to parks and gardens.

The evergreen *Magnolia grandiflora* flowers and grows particularly well when trained against a sunny wall and may be used to create a focal point in courtyard gardens, or to add instant charm to home exteriors.

Magnolias can also make striking floral arrangements when they are cut by the branch and assembled in a narrow vase. Alternatively, they may be used to create an elegant centrepiece for the dining-room table when arranged as individual flowers in a shallow bowl.

FEATURE GABRIELLA DYSON

Vertical aspirations

Pergolas are an ideal way to preserve shade and add vertical interest to the garden. The Bodiam garden pergola, by Rowen and Wren, is crafted from solid brass and would make a timeless addition to both urban and rural settings.

Try growing rose 'Open Arms' on short pergolas. These miniature ramblers produce pale pink flowers throughout the summer months and will perfume the garden with a light, musky fragrance. Alternatively, grow rose 'Albrighton Rambler' on larger pergolas for an exceptionally-healthy repeat-flowering rambler bearing sprays of small, cup-shaped flowers. *Both roses can be purchased from David Austin Roses. Pergolas start from £892 and can be pre-ordered from rowenandwren.co.uk*





Monet to Matisse

The Royal Academy of Arts presents a major exhibition examining the role of gardens in the paintings of Claude Monet and his contemporaries. *Painting the Modern Garden: Monet to Matisse* brings together more than 120 works from some of the world's greatest artistic talents, including Van Gogh, Renoir, Cézanne, Matisse, Klimt, Kandinsky and Monet himself.

Highlights of the exhibition include Monet's *Lady in the Garden* (1867); Renoir's *Monet Painting in His Garden at Argenteuil* (1873) and Kandinsky's *Murnau The Garden II* (1910). *The exhibition runs until Wednesday 20 April. Tickets may be purchased online at royalacademy.org.uk*



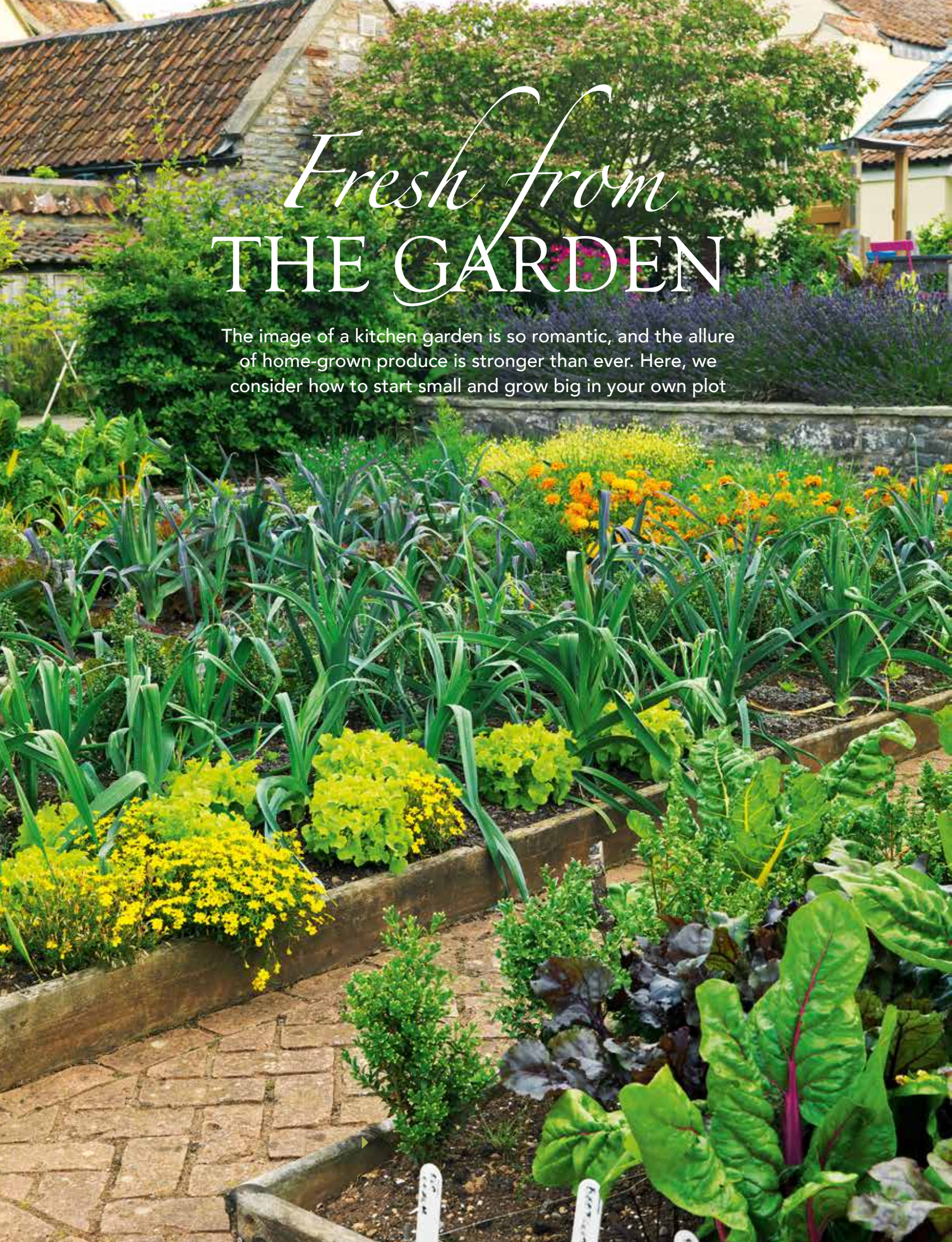
Potted pleasures

Muscari, or grape hyacinths, are an excellent container bulb, but be sure to pick one of the choicer cultivars rather than the invasive species, *Muscari armeniacum*, which has sprawling, lax leaves and seeds and spreads offsets everywhere. This powder-blue variety is *Muscari* 'Cupido', which looks beautiful teamed with a pale turquoise glazed pot, and contrasting daffodils behind: *Narcissus* 'Hawera' with its dainty lemon-yellow flowers and 'Reggae', adding extra colour with a pale peach-orange trumpet and white perianth.

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Fresh from THE GARDEN

The image of a kitchen garden is so romantic, and the allure of home-grown produce is stronger than ever. Here, we consider how to start small and grow big in your own plot





There is something irresistibly appealing about a traditional kitchen garden, with its rows of vegetables vying with soft fruits, flowers and herbs. It harks back to a time before freezers, processed food and the fast-food frenzy when produce was fresh and bursting with flavour. Today, the wheel has come full circle as people become increasingly aware of what they eat, and home-grown fruit and vegetables are back on the menu.

SMALL BEGINNINGS

'Growing your own' for the first time can be daunting, but it is easy to start in a small way with a couple of containers of herbs or cut-and-come-again salad leaves that are ready within six to eight weeks and regrow after cutting. It is surprising how much produce flourishes in containers, provided it is grown in a proprietary compost fed with slow-release fertiliser. Strawberries grow especially well in special, multi-holed terracotta pots, whilst weeping tomatoes thrive in hanging baskets – 'Tumbling Tom Red' produces long trusses of sweet cherry tomatoes. Tall tomato plants thrive in grow bags on the patio. A good tip is to bury a small flower pot in the compost alongside each tomato plant with 2cm of the pot showing above ground, and regularly fill with water, which is directed to the roots.

Alternatively, plant patio pots with tomatoes, aubergines or chilli peppers. These handsome plants crop well in a sunny spot and can be interspersed amongst flowering plants. Chillies such as 'Hungarian Wax' produce ripe fruit within just four months of sowing, and the more the fruit is picked, the more the plant produces. Support larger varieties with a cane, keep the soil moist and you will harvest fruit well into the autumn. Most chillies need insect pollination to form fruit, so if in doubt, pollinate by hand with a moist paintbrush by transferring pollen from flower to flower.

PLANT UP FLOWER BORDERS

Another easy route to growing edible plants is to simply add them to existing borders amongst flowering plants: a throwback to the original cottage garden-style. Many beautiful flowers taste as good as they look – the petals from marigolds, sunflowers and bergamot inject tangy flavours into salads – and tall herbs such as fennel and borage add texture and bulk to borders. So, too, does sweet cicely – a cow parsley-like plant with aniseed-flavoured leaves, and a particular favourite with celebrity gardener and author Alys Fowler.

She is a keen exponent of growing pretty and productive plants side by side. "I have a wonderfully productive garden that blends flowers, fruit and vegetables in a natural way and provides something to eat most days of the year," she explains. In her urban plot, lettuces grow alongside forget-me-nots, strawberries, carrots peep out of chimney pots and rocket is planted in borders.

Her planting changes character quite dramatically through the season, starting low down in early summer before height is added by beans, sweet peas, sunflowers and tree spinach which grows tall. "It doesn't matter if it bolts because the tips are still tender," she smiles.

OPPOSITE Raised beds are a great way to establish a varied kitchen garden. Here, at Holt Organic Farm, Swiss chard, lettuces, leeks and beetroot grow alongside French marigolds.
ABOVE LEFT Consider how much time you can spare or want to spend tending your kitchen garden before choosing which approach to take.
ABOVE RIGHT Add beautiful touches, like these coppiced hazel rods forming an arch to support runner beans and sweet peas.



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Behind her relaxed approach lies careful planning to ensure that no plant overshadows its neighbours, and she takes special care of the soil. "I can't stress enough how vital soil fertility is – it has to be high because everything is crammed in together," she says. The key lies in a large compost heap which feeds the whole garden. "The healthiest vegetables are grown on healthy soil – get the soil right, and you solve more than half the potential problems with pests," she adds. She gardens organically, adamant that the best defence against pests lies in creating a healthy environment in which birds and insects co-exist.

ORGANIC INSIGHTS

Organic cultivation is no easy option, but the longer a garden is run along organic lines, the more in balance nature becomes. Many pests are dealt with by natural predators such as birds, hedgehogs, frogs and toads, plus beneficial insects such as hoverflies and spiders. Companion planting (growing particular different plants next to each other) also helps deter pests. For example, French marigolds planted at the same time as tomato plants deter aphids, whilst growing carrots and leeks together protects both because each has a strong aroma which drives away the other's pests. Garlic or chives are another strong deterrent, especially for warding off aphid attacks on roses. Borders of sage, rosemary, thyme and lavender are beneficial because not only do their combined scents confuse and hinder pests, their flowers attract bees, essential for pollination.

STYLISH FORMAL LAYOUTS

Traditionally, a 'potager' is a decorative arrangement of ornamental plants which, chosen for their form and colours, are often contained within hedges of box or lavender. Designs can be complex, usually based on a series of geometrically-shaped beds which are filled with fruit, vegetables, herbs and flowers. Colours and textures are carefully balanced, and larger beds often have a central focus such as an obelisk of sweet peas or beans, standard rose bush, box topiary or bay tree.

Raised beds are another formal way of organising a kitchen garden, making it much easier to manage. For example, a parterre of four beds could be dedicated to herbs, vegetables, soft fruits and cut flowers respectively, and rotated annually to help minimise a build-up of crop-specific pests and reduce the risk of specific nutrient deficiencies developing. Import a good blend of loam and compost to fill each bed – if the existing soil is heavy clay, break it up first and add a layer of gravel. Each bed can be contained within brick or wooden side panels of 2.5cm-thick timber and built between 20cm and 40cm high. Beds that are around 120cm square can be reached from every side, avoiding stepping on the soil – compacted soil reduces the amount of air the plants get to their roots, slowing down growth. Paths should be wide enough for a wheelbarrow, and low maintenance – bark chippings over weedproof membrane is an easily-laid, inexpensive option.

Nothing matches the flavour of freshly picked fruit and vegetables, and a buoyancy of interest in

TOP LEFT This elegant potager features clipped standard medlars in box-edged beds of herbs, violas, roses and vegetables, with beans and sweet peas trained up cane wigwams, plus box topiary.

TOP MIDDLE Terracotta forcing pots for rhubarb sit happily in a vegetable bed amongst cabbages and artichokes.

TOP RIGHT This courtyard of raised vegetable beds feature cabbages, lettuces, peas, carrots, pak choi, chard, leeks, chives and cavolo nero with alliums, euphorbias, irises and astrantias.

BOTTOM RIGHT Companion planting (growing particular different plants next to each other) can help deter pests.



ABOVE Statues and other decorative touches can lift a kitchen plot and help it blend with the rest of your garden.

home-grown options stems from an increasing emphasis on exercise and healthy diet, and celebrity chefs such as Jamie Oliver campaigning for fresh, tasty produce and creating mouth-watering recipes. Vegetables in vogue include the humble squash. The smaller ones are popular for their delicious nutty flavours. Winter squash 'Rouge Vif d'Etampes', an old French heirloom, is delicious in pies and has a soft, melt-in-the-mouth taste similar to sweet potato, whilst 'Onion Squash Potimarron' lends itself to stuffing and 'Little Gem' can be roasted whole. Miniature vegetables (usually called 'mini veg') are also popular. There are baby beetroots such as 'Solo', 'Little Finger' carrots, 'Igloo' miniature cauliflowers, attractive purple cultivars of kohl rabi and a wide range of salad leaves including rocket, endive, radicchio and lettuces, crinkled, fringed or serrated.

Finally, if lack of space is a limiting factor, renting an allotment is a sociable solution. Allotment sites, with neat lines of vegetables and ramshackle sheds, are a familiar sight, but the image of allotment holders as grandads in cloth caps is out of date, as many more young people, women and families have become involved. Allotments are place where people of every age, background and culture are united by two great British pastimes – gossip and gardening. For details, contact the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners by calling 01536 266576 or visiting the website nsalg.org.uk

NOTES ON GREENHOUSES

Given the vagaries of the British weather, a greenhouse can be a great asset to the kitchen gardener – magnifying the benefit of early sun, protecting crops from late frosts and, even unheated, allowing gardeners to extend the seasons for the widest possible range of vegetables. A greenhouse allows us to start hardy plants earlier than when sowing directly outdoors and helps achieve earlier harvests of tender plants.

The RHS advises that for maximum benefits, a greenhouse should be sited to receive uninterrupted sun all day, but enjoy screening or shelter from cold northerly and easterly winds. It also advises that a north-south orientation will mean the end timbers will regulate the amount of sun during the hottest midday period.

Aluminium-framed greenhouses are low maintenance and have the slimmest frames which cast minimal shade on the interior. Wooden designs need periodic upkeep but can be painted any colour to create an attractive feature in their own right. Quality bespoke aluminimum designs can also be colour spray-painted to a specified hue.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

- Ventilation to regulate temperature is vital; roof vents are best.
- Glass glazing is most efficient for transmitting light and heat, although using half-walling can reduce heat loss. Toughened glass is more expensive but avoids the risk of shattered glass in the event of a broken pane.
- Good insulation reduces heat loss, so check seals work correctly, always replace broken or cracked panes and ensure vents and doors fit snugly.
- Guttering, a downpipe and a water butt allow rainwater collection close to hand for watering plants.
- A greenhouse thermometer helps monitor temperatures. The RHS advises that plant damage can occur above 27°C and that a minimum of 3°C is sufficient to sustain many tender plants, but a temperature of 7°C is more desirable.
- Plant staging or tiered shelving will maximise growing space. ■

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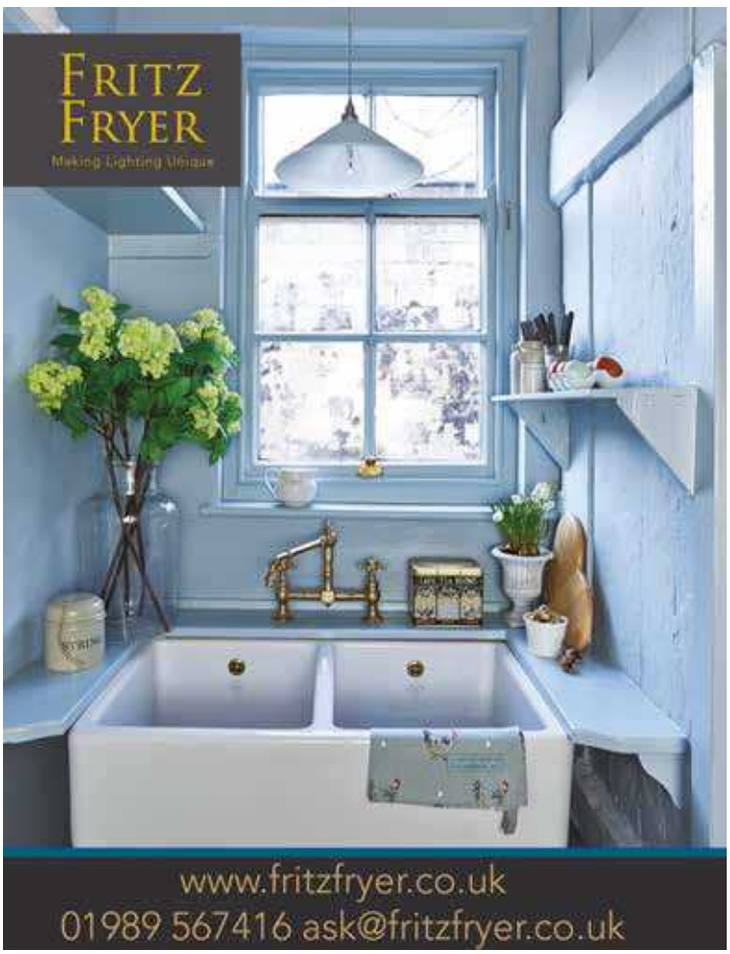
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The art of ORDERLY LINEN CUPBOARDS

Passionate about quintessential English customs, our incognito columnist reminds us to do the best things in life in the most elegant fashion, always with a twinkle in her eye

BELOW RIGHT
For those who prefer to steer away from patterned bedlinen, a coloured border or scalloped edge can add a touch of interest in a traditional manner. *Pure cotton scalloped-edge bedlinen, from £80, sophieconran.com*

Fresh linen is my only vice. Were I to find myself rolling in money, I would have someone come in daily to change my sheets. There is something utterly joyful about getting into a freshly laundered, newly made bed.

As it is, I change my sheets once a week, on a Sunday, thereby ensuring the best night's sleep of the week will see me wake utterly rested and ready to tackle the world with new vigour on a Monday morning.

As a child I would hide in the linen cupboard. It seemed a place of great possibility, with its piles of sheets and deliciously relaxing lavender scent. I would often be scolded for unfolding the crisply ironed sheets and disturbing – in the days before the omnipresent duvet – the satin-edged blankets.

Mr M remembers these blankets fondly, having spent rainy days in the nursery turning them into tents. He also recalls the moment his mother gave in to the duvet trend.

When we were newly engaged and I was planning to stay at his parents' house for the first time, he confided in me that his mother was distrustful of the new fashion for what she described as "a continental quilt". Her mouth twisted a little when she said the words, as if this strange, foreign way of doing things were in some way immoral. They would, he remembered, first be used only by younger guests and only in the spare bedrooms.

Naturally, Mr M and I now have duvets at home, both in my bedroom and his, where I suspect the laundry routine is somewhat more relaxed. Sometimes, however, as a treat in the depths of winter, I will resurrect the blankets, as there is something rather comforting about being properly tucked in. On these occasions, Mr M has been known to visit.

I often think one can tell a lot about a person's psyche by the state of their linen cupboard. Neat, tidy and labelled suggests that one is perfectly in control, managing well and in good spirits. A cupboard where linen is simply thrown in – seemingly with no thought or planning; with patterned and plain designs of all sizes in a muddle – shows someone at best in a state of flux, and at worst letting standards drop.

To be fair, it could be they are perfectly happy and wildly creative, but for me it is a worry. After all, if one's linen cupboard is in such a state, how can one function? Too regimented, however – as if a ruler has been used – shows one is either looking at the cupboard of an army officer, or that the owner needs to relax a little.

Whatever is going on in one's mind, everything can be made just a little bit better if one has clean, deliciously-scented sheets to climb into at night. In a survey in 2014, one in ten of those polled by YouGov said they did not change their sheets more than once a month. How horrific. How anyone can live with sheets that have been on that long is quite beyond my comprehension. I wonder, perhaps, if these are the same people who take their children to school having not bothered to change out of their pyjamas? What baffles me most is how easy it is to keep a decent linen cupboard. All one needs is two sets of linen for each bed: one on, one off. ▶



I am not what one would call adventurous when it comes to my choice of linen. Generally, I like plain white, although I do have one rather pretty set from Cabbages & Roses, which has a beautiful floral pattern. I like a high thread count and, after laundering my sheets, I store them in a cupboard with fresh sprigs of lavender.

Organising a linen cupboard is frightfully easy and everyone has their own way. Mrs M senior, for example, insisted each set of linen was kept within one of the pillowcases belonging to the set, thus keeping everything together and keeping the cupboard regimented.

I rather like to use dividers, as I prefer to give my linen room to breathe. A friend of mine insists on having sticky labels on the front of each shelf describing the linen that should reside in each space. Here, one will read things such as 'small pink flowers' or 'off-white plain'.

Of course, not everyone stores bedlinen by sets, some prefer to store by kind, so they might have labels reading 'white flat', 'white fitted' and so on. When one is as busy as I am, or lives with someone as disorganised as Mr M, I suspect this could be a little too confusing and could definitely lead to waking up in quite the wrong sheets.

Towels, flannels, blankets, pillows, tablecloths, napkins and cushion covers also need to have their own space. I allocate a shelf to each type of linen, fold them neatly and stack them. I remember once seeing Martha Stewart suggesting rolling napkins around a cardboard tube and covering it with cellophane. This is a good idea for very best linen that is rarely used, but I think it would be a little too taxing to do it on a weekly basis.

Clean linen is one of life's joys, and a fresh scent is important. Choose washing liquid wisely. Make scented sachets or use fresh lavender in the cupboard, and make sure everything is perfectly dry before it is folded and stored, otherwise it will take on that awful damp smell that seems to become all-pervading.

Each night, I like to turn down my bed before I have a bath and spritz my bedlinen with pillow spray. Mr M thinks it is nonsense, but I swear I have a much better night's sleep when this has been done and he has been dispatched to his own room. ■



BELOW Using lavender to scent linen not only provides a lovely aroma, but it is also said to help induce peaceful sleep.



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AND SO TO BED

Regular readers will know I am a great fan of Cabbages & Roses, so I was delighted to see they have created a range for John Lewis. I particularly like the Catherine Rose set in pale blue. Perfect for spare bedrooms, it is 100 per cent cotton and has a 200 thread count, so guests will be utterly comfortable. As the range starts at £12, it is not going to break the bank either.
johnlewis.com

A FRESH START

What one washes their linen with is as important as how it is stored. Harsh, overpowering laundry detergent is unkind to cotton and has an unnatural scent. I recently tried Natural Laundry from The Linen Works and was very impressed. The laundry liquid is scented with bergamot, jasmine, rose and vanilla, amongst other things. It is good for the environment as well as the skin and costs £15. It will be available to purchase from spring 2016.
thelinenworks.co.uk

PILLOW TALK

Temple Spa, one of my favourite beauty brands, has a lovely spray called Quietude. Its soothing scent lifts my mood and banishes stress. I spray my pillow with it and those of any visiting children. It really does ensure everyone has a quiet night. Using lemon, thyme, juniper oil, lavender, eucalyptus oil, grapefruit, patchouli, rosemary, wormwood, vetiver, clove, camphor, celery, citronella and orange, it is truly a balm for the senses. It costs £7 for 30ml.
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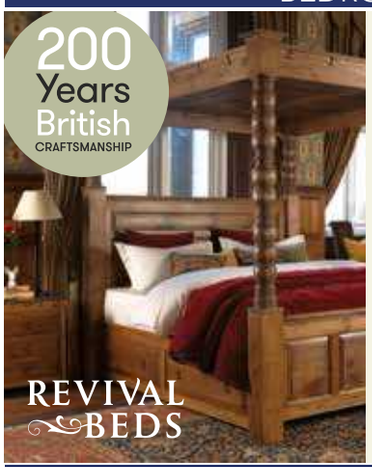


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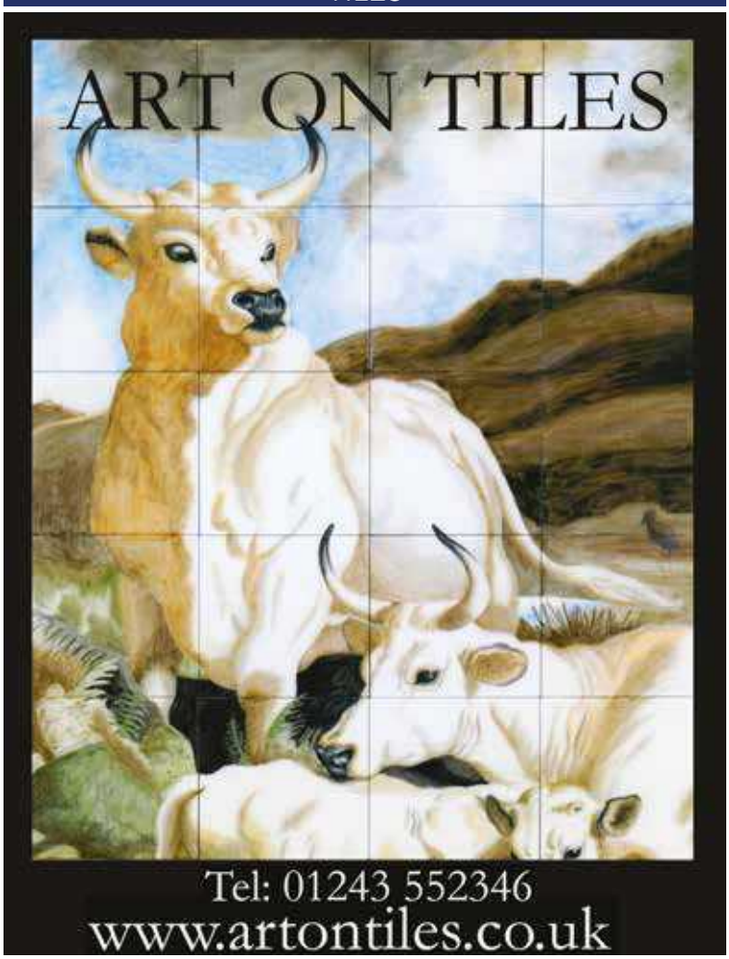
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Authentically ENGLISH

Energy efficiency and an environmentally responsible ethos lie at the heart of this ingeniously designed range cooker

Back in the 1970s, no one was talking about renewable energy, but Ossie Goring always liked to do things differently. Buying a derelict watermill nearly 50 years ago, he saw no reason why the electricity he needed to run his agricultural engineering company could not be provided by the fast-flowing water, as it had done for countless industries during the days before the Industrial Revolution. "Coaley Mill is actually mentioned in the Domesday Book," explains his son Guy, who now runs the company. "For 200 years, spades and shovels were made here, but in the 1960s no one was interested in buying old mills and actually using the water power."

The water turbine that Ossie installed in 1978 actually produced more than enough power to run his business, and with the small amount that was left over, he built a fuel-efficient range cooker that would also provide the mill with background warmth – thus the very first Everhot was born. An Everhot is a highly efficient range cooker that provides warmth and all the cooking facilities of its competitors, using less than half the energy.

"Cheap labour and intensive fuels like coal and wood meant that energy-efficiency was not a priority when the traditional range cooker originated," Guy explains. "Fuel was plentiful and houses were draughty and poorly insulated – now the situation is very different."

Energy efficiency and conservation has always been at the heart of Everhot's ethos. Because it is designed to work using a 'trickle feed' of energy, the Everhot is ideally suited to renewable sources. "Nowadays, it is quite common for our customers to have solar panels, with a typical four kilowatt domestic installation producing enough electricity over the year to run their Everhot."

It is striking how much things have changed. When Ossie Goring wanted to put in his water turbine, he had to campaign to have the law changed as turbines were seen by the Government as 'obstructions'. "Not only does it provide clean energy, but the turbine actually cleans and aerates the water," Guy adds. ■









TOP The Everhot combines all the features of a traditional range cooker with incredible energy efficiency.

MIDDLE The company is now run by Guy Goring from the original mill in Gloucestershire. Everhot's entire range is still made here using components produced either by the company itself, or within the UK.

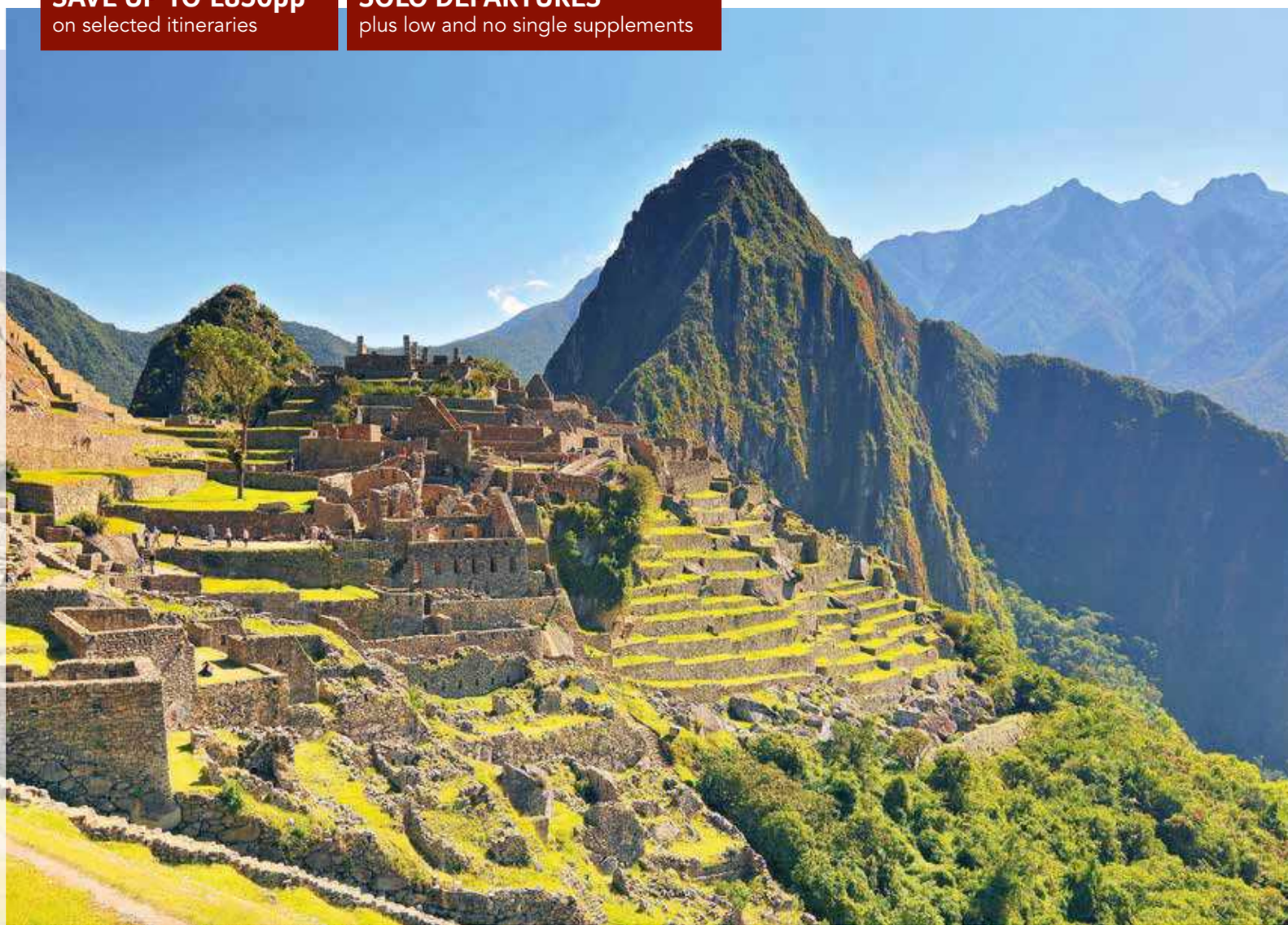
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